JOHN WESLEY

C
Bx
8495
W51
096

V505
W54

Cornell University Library

BOUGHT WITH THE INCOME
FROM THE
SAGE ENDOWMENT FUND
THE GIFT OF
Henry W. Sage
1891

A.69936 14/5/94

S
14/5

DATE DUE

MAY 29 1945

MAY 24 1949 G

Cornell University Library
BX8495.W51 O96
John Wesley / by J. H. Overton.
3 1924 029 472 739
olin

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924029472739

English Leaders of Religion

Edited by A. M. M. Stedman, M.A.

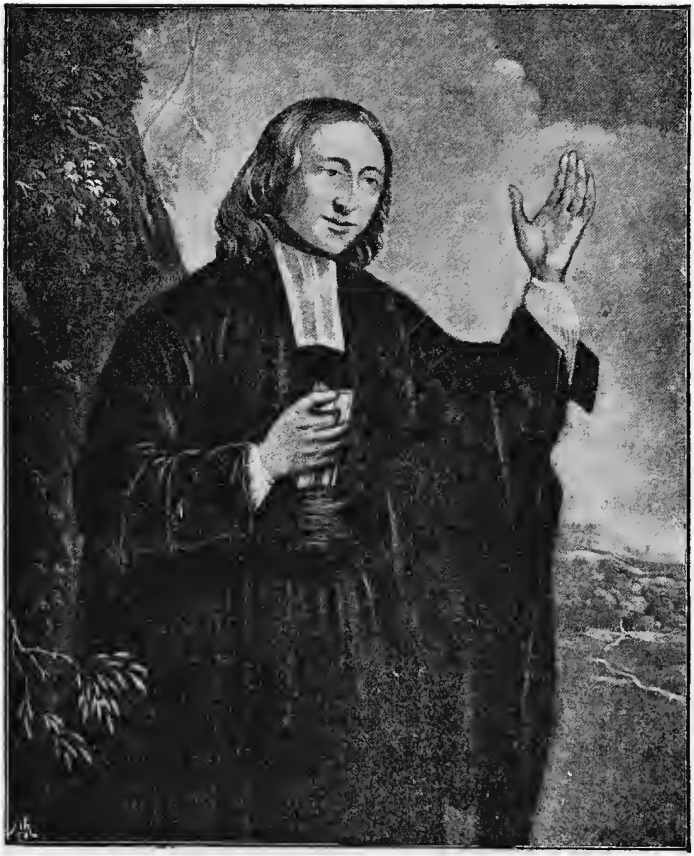
JOHN WESLEY

English Leaders of Religion.

UNDER the above title MESSRS. METHUEN are publishing a series of short biographies, free from party bias, of the most prominent leaders of religious life and thought in this and the last century.

CARDINAL NEWMAN.	*R. H. Hutton.*
JOHN WESLEY.	*J. H. Overton.*
JOHN KEBLE.	*W. Lock.*
CHARLES SIMEON.	*H. C. G. Moule.*
BISHOP WILBERFORCE.	*G. W. Daniell.*
F. D. MAURICE.	*Colonel F. Maurice.*
THOMAS CHALMERS.	*Mrs. Oliphant.*

Other volumes will be announced in due course.



JOHN WESLEY, M.A. ÆT. 67.

JOHN WESLEY

BY

J. H. OVERTON, M.A.

Methuen & Co.

18, BURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.

1891

[*All rights reserved*]

A. 69936

~~7671 A 41~~

RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON & BUNGAY.

PREFACE.

It is obviously impossible, within the compass of two hundred short pages, to give anything like a full account of a life which was all but commensurate with the eighteenth century, and which was certainly the busiest, and in some respects the most important life in that century—a life about which the most divers views have been taken, and in which the interest, so far from having slackened through lapse of time, is as keen if not keener than ever it was. All that can be attempted is to select the salient points of John Wesley's life and character, and to draw as vivid a picture of the man and his work as space will permit. As a native of the same county, a member of the same University, on the foundation of the same college in that University, a Priest of the same Church, a dweller in the same house, a worker in the same parish, a student for nearly twenty years of the Church life of the century in which John Wesley was so prominent a figure, the present writer has naturally for a long time taken the deepest interest

in his subject, but whether he has succeeded in communicating that interest to his readers is quite another question. It only remains for him to return his hearty thanks to the Rev. L. H. Wellesley Wesley and Edward Riggall, Esq., for placing at his disposal a vast number of portraits, out of which one has been selected belonging to the former gentleman.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	EARLY YEARS	1
II.	CHARTERHOUSE AND CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD	8
III.	LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD	15
IV.	GEORGIA	43
V.	THE MORAVIAN INFLUENCE	59
VI.	JOHN WESLEY'S TEACHING	69
VII.	WESLEY AS AN ITINERANT	86
VIII.	WESLEY AS AN ORGANIZER	120
IX.	WESLEY'S FRIENDS AND OPPONENTS	145
X.	INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES	160
XI.	LITERARY WORK	169
XII.	PERSONAL TRAITS	179
XIII.	OLD AGE AND DEATH	193

JOHN WESLEY.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

JOHN WESLEY[1] was born on June 17th (O. S.), 1703, at Epworth Rectory, his father, Samuel Wesley, being rector of the parish from 1696 to 1735. He was of gentle birth on both sides. The Wesleys were an ancient family settled in the west of England from the time of the Conquest. The Annesleys, his mother's family, were an equally ancient and aristocratic stock. The fact that Wesley was a gentleman born and bred was no slight help to the influence he afterwards acquired. The native delicacy of such a man gives him a certain tact in dealing with the poor, which is rarely acquired by those who are not to the manner born. He had no temptation to flatter the great, and was not intoxicated by being brought into contact with them. But John Wesley owed much more to his parents than the good blood in his veins. Both Samuel and Susanna

[1] He was christened John Benjamin, but the second name was always dropped both by himself and all the family.

Wesley were people of real piety and considerable abilities, which had been improved by culture; both felt keenly their responsibility in bringing up their numerous offspring in the fear and love of God; both had thought out the great problem of religion for themselves, for both had been reared in the ranks of Nonconformity, and both had come over at an early age to the Church of England, from a deliberate conviction that it was the more excellent way. To the mother chiefly was consigned the task of the early training both of sons and daughters; and that regard for discipline, those methodical and orderly habits, that sense of the value of time and of the duty of cultivating his talents to the utmost, above all, that intense realization of an overruling Providence and of the supreme importance of religion, which marked the whole career of John Wesley, may be clearly traced back to his mother's training at Epworth Rectory. Of all her children, she felt it her duty to bestow the greatest pains upon John, who had been providentially preserved to her when he was all but burnt to death in the fire which consumed the Rectory in 1709. "I do intend," she writes in her private meditations under the heading of "Son John," "to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been, that I may do my endeavour to instil into his mind the principles of Thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success!" Upon John himself his deliverance from the fire made a deep impression; though he was only six years old at the time, he remembered all the circumstances perfectly well, and many years afterwards (1750), when he happened to

be holding a watch-night service on the anniversary of his rescue, "it came into my mind," he says, "that this was the very day and hour (11 p.m., Feb. 9) in which, forty years ago, I was taken out of the flames. I stopped, and gave a short account of that wonderful providence." Three years later (1753), when he thought he was dying, "to prevent vile panegyric" he wrote his own epitaph, in which he described himself as "a Brand plucked out of the burning."

As he was thoughtful beyond his years, it is quite possible that other events which occurred at Epworth during his childhood may really have helped to shape his future career. It has been suggested, for instance, that the serious weekly conversations which Mrs. Wesley used to hold with each of her children individually may have been present to his mind when he established the class-meeting. That he remembered and valued them is certain, for when he was a Fellow of Lincoln, he wrote to his mother begging her to give him that time which she had formerly given him on a Thursday. Again, it has been conjectured that the gatherings at the rectory on Sunday afternoons, at which Mrs. Wesley, in the absence of her husband on Convocation business in London, attracted and affected the rude people of Epworth in a way that the rector had never been able to do from the pulpit, impressed upon John the desirableness of supplementing the regular work of the Church by the formation of Societies. He certainly did intimate very often in after-life that the disheartening results of his good father's efforts in his parish led him to think lightly of the parochial system. But these were probably the inferences of later years; at any rate they cannot be directly

traced back to his childhood. What we *can* say for a certainty is, that he most thoroughly appreciated the excellent training, moral, spiritual, and intellectual, which he received at Epworth Rectory, all his life long. When he was quite an old man (1771), he wrote with rapture about an admirable household he had become acquainted with in Ireland, and added, "Their ten children are in such order as I have not seen for many years; indeed, never since I left my father's house." It is also clear that he attributed the benefits of his early training chiefly to his mother. For though he never spoke but with the greatest reverence and love of his father, it is to Mrs. Wesley that he most frequently and most warmly alludes. One of the reasons why he resolved that he would never marry (it is a pity that he did not keep his resolution), was because he despaired of finding any woman equal to his own mother; and he more than once expressed a wish that he might not survive her. So highly did he value her method of bringing up her family, that he persuaded her with some difficulty to write a full account of it to him in 1732. From this account we learn how "the children were put into a regular method of living, in such things as they were capable of, from their birth;" how "when turned a year old (and some before), they were taught to fear the rod and cry softly," how she insisted "upon conquering their will betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual," and many other details which are too long to quote.

Mrs. Wesley's reluctance to write this account arose from a reason which seven years' residence at

Epworth Rectory enables the present writer heartily to endorse. "It cannot," she says, "be of any service to any one to know how I, that have lived such a retired life for so many years, used to employ my time and care in bringing up my children. No one can, without renouncing the world in the most literal sense, observe my method; and there are few, if any, that would entirely devote twenty years of the prime of life in hopes to save the souls of their children, which they think may be saved without so much ado; for that was my principal intention, however unskilfully managed." Now the geographical position of Epworth shows to some extent its isolation; but its ecclesiastical position is still more isolated. It is cut off from its own proper diocese by the rapid river Trent, which it is sometimes difficult and even dangerous to cross. The rector of Epworth would be naturally drawn to the Lincoln side (on one side his parish touched Yorkshire), being a prominent man in the diocese, and the representative of its clergy in Convocation; but his family would be quite cut off from Lincolnshire—(though we are Lincolnshire people, we talk about "going into Lincolnshire," as though we were no part of it, to the present day). There would be few neighbours with whom the Wesleys could associate on terms of equality; they would therefore be left very much to their own resources. But, as all the family—father, mother, and all the brothers and sisters—were above the average in point of abilities and attainments, this would be no detriment to John Wesley's intellectual culture, while at the same time it would lay the foundation of that simplicity, guilelessness, and unworldliness which were his strongly-marked

characteristics all through life. His early home training also combined the double advantage of giving him the culture and refinement of a thorough gentleman, and also a hardiness and power to endure poverty. For from circumstances into which it is not necessary to enter, the Wesleys were always poor, sometimes even to the verge of destitution.

John Wesley had not been reared in the lap of luxury, and his habit of roughing it in his childhood stood him in good stead in his hard after-life. All the little traits of him at Epworth indicate that the boy was father of the man. He was so far beyond his years that his father, who would be a strict censor in such a matter, admitted him to the Holy Communion when he was only eight years of age. He had the small-pox shortly after (April 1712). "Jack," writes his mother, "has borne his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without any complaint, though he seemed angry at the small-pox when they were sore, as we guessed by his looking sourly at them, for he never said anything." "I believe," he writes himself, "till I was about ten years old I had not sinned away that washing of the Holy Ghost which was given me in baptism." One pictures John Wesley at Epworth as a grave, sedate child, always wanting to know the reason of everything, one of a group of remarkable children, of whom his sister Martha was most like him both in appearance and character, each of them with a strong individuality and a very high spirit, but all well kept in hand by their admirable mother, all precise and rather formal, after the fashion of the day, in their language and habits. Mrs. Wesley complains, that after the fire of 1709, when the children had to be

billeted out among the neighbours, the arrangements became disorganized; but she soon put them into order again when they settled down in their new house, which is now standing.

Before leaving John Wesley's first home, mention must be made of the famous Epworth ghost, although he did not commence his antics until John had left Epworth for Charterhouse. "Old Jeffery" is to some extent answerable for a marked feature of Wesley's character—his love of the marvellous, and his intense belief in the reality of apparitions and of witchcraft. The noises which disturbed the Wesley household in the winter of 1715-16 have never been satisfactorily explained; the Wesleys themselves undoubtedly attributed them to supernatural causes, and both Mr. and Mrs. Wesley's comments upon what happened show how thoroughly both believed in the active interference of spiritual agents in the affairs of this life. What some have thought a weakness in John Wesley he clearly inherited from his parents, who fostered it both by precept and example.

CHAPTER II.

CHARTERHOUSE AND CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

On January 28, 1713-14, John Wesley was admitted on the foundation of Charterhouse, on the nomination of the Duke of Buckingham, who had already shown himself a kind friend to the Wesleys. At this famous school he remained for more than six years, during the whole of which time Dr. Thomas Walker was the head-master, and Mr. Andrew Tooke "usher," or second master.[1] His quietness, regularity, and industry made him a favourite with his teachers, and the scholarship which he showed in after-life indicates plainly that his school-days were not wasted. He kept up his health by following his father's sensible advice, to run round the Charterhouse garden three times every morning; and the tyranny of the elder boys, who used to appropriate the meat apportioned to the younger, and thus forced him in the earlier part of his school-life to live chiefly on dry bread, unwittingly contributed to prepare him for the hard, ascetic life which he afterwards led. "From ten to fourteen," he says, "I had little but bread to eat, and not great

[1] Mr. Tooke was the author of a once well-known book, *The Pantheon.*

plenty of that. I believe this was so far from hurting me, that it laid the foundation of lasting health." The story of his propensity to associate with, and domineer over, boys younger than himself, and of his answer to Mr. Tooke, who remonstrated with him for so doing, "Better rule in hell than serve in heaven," rests upon slender foundations, and may well have arisen from a prevalent but in my opinion a mistaken view of his character. Nor is it quite clear how far he lost the religious impressions which he carried with him from Epworth. The removal from home, and such a home as Epworth Rectory, to a public school, as public schools then were, could hardly fail to be perilous; and from John Wesley's own vehement condemnation of the public school system in his sermon on the education of children, written many years later, we may fairly presume that his own experience of Charterhouse did not commend that system to him. He describes his own state both as a school-boy and an undergraduate as that of one who was living without any real sense of religion, and who habitually indulged in outward though not flagrant sin; but he never ceased to read his Bible daily, and to say his prayers morning and evening. And surely it was greatly to Wesley's ultimate advantage that he had been a public-school boy. For, after all, it is not a healthy training to bring up a boy, as it were, under a glass case; and in spite of their many evils,—and in the eighteenth century these evils were *very* many,—public schools afford a mental and moral discipline which cannot be found elswhere; in a rough way they brace the tone of the character, impart a sort of undefinable readiness to give and take, and encourage a larger way of looking at things than any other system

does. Moreover, the knowledge which they convey, if narrow in its range, is thoroughly sound of its kind; for, after all, public-school masters are, and always have been, the picked men of England. *Exceptis excipiendis*, you can tell at a glance one who has had a public-school and university education from one who has not. We have only to compare the two Wesleys in these respects with some other leaders of the Evangelical revival to find a striking illustration of what is meant.

During the last four years of John's stay at Charterhouse both his brothers were at Westminster—Samuel as usher, Charles as a young scholar. Their father had good reason to boast that he had given his three sons the best education that England could afford. Charterhouse had not quite the splendid reputation of Westminster, which school, under the régime of Dr. Busby, continued by his successor, Dr. Freind, had attained to an eminence which no school ever had reached in England. But Charterhouse too had grand traditions of its own; when John Wesley was there, only a few years had passed away since Joseph Addison and Richard Steele were being nurtured in its cloisters; a little later two other eminent men, whose names were afterwards to be strangely linked with Wesley's own, Archbishop Potter and Bishop Benson, were educated there; and many other great names might be found on the roll of its worthies. John Wesley himself conceived such a love for the place, that when he was in London he always made a point of walking round it every year. His elder brother Samuel, who really seems to have been a kind of second father to the whole family, kept a watch over his progress from Westminster, invited him to his house, and sent reports of

him home. "My brother Jack," he writes to his father in 1719, "I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son [Charles] a scholar;" and in the same year, "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can." How many boys of sixteen in these examination-ridden days are learning Hebrew as fast as they can?

On July 13, 1720, John Wesley entered as a commoner at Christ Church, Oxford, bringing with him from Charterhouse a school exhibition of £40 a year. We must multiply by four to find the true value of this aid. £160 a year should have been nearly enough to maintain an economical undergraduate; but at this period John Wesley seems to have been rather too like his father, who never was a good manager of money. There is really no reason for supposing that he was at all extravagant at Christ Church; but his correspondence shows that he was constantly in monetary difficulties. It is hardly necessary to dwell upon the reputation of "The House," which in the days before Wesley had completed the educatiou of the majority of the foremost men in England. It had the pick of Westminster, and Dr. Fell crowned the edifice which Dr. Busby had begun to raise. Its repute was not, perhaps, quite so high when Wesley was an undergraduate, but still it was a grand society to belong to. We have an interesting description of John Wesley at this period by a contemporary, Mr. Badcock, according to whom he was "the very sensible and acute collegian, baffling every man by the subtleties of logic, and laughing at them for being so easily routed; a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments;" "gay

and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humour." This is very different from the grave child at Epworth of fifteen years before, and it quite bears out what Wesley says about his own state at school and college. Only we must beware of laying too much stress upon what he regards as a deterioration; the reaction from the severe restraint at Epworth was inevitable; he was passing through a crisis which all except a very few have to encounter. There is absolutely no proof of any grave moral delinquency; he was simply the lively, careless young man, but certainly not the mere idler, for his well-stored mind forbids any such notion, and still less, the profligate. He dabbled in poetry; he was troubled, for almost the only time in his life, about his health, and adopted the severe regimen recommended by the famous Dr. Cheyne. His tutors were, first a Mr. Wigan, and then a Mr. Sherman, but they do not seem to have made much impression upon him. There is little more to be said about his life at Christ Church, except that it is surely not fair to blame the authorities because they failed to touch, as those at Charterhouse had failed to touch, Wesley's higher nature, and because neither enabled him to keep up, under new and far more trying circumstances, the high standard which had been set before him at Epworth. If the tree is to be judged by its fruits, his days at Charterhouse and Christ Church could not have been idly spent, for he carried away with him an amount of mental culture which would compare favourably with that of some of the best specimens of these days of incessant examination.

Mental culture, however, is one thing, spiritual growth another. There are abundant traces of the former, none of the latter, between his leaving Epworth and

his last year at Christ Church. Then, when he was twenty-two years of age, a great change came over him. The question now arose as to whether he was to enter the sacred ministry or not. No thoughtful man, who had been trained as John Wesley had been trained at Epworth, could possibly contemplate so momentous a step without serious consideration.

It was early in 1725 that the thought of taking Holy Orders occurred to him. He wrote home on the subject; his father counselled delay, fearing lest his motive might be, "as Eli's sons, to eat a piece of bread;" but his mother judged his character better, and saw that the change was real. "I was much pleased," she says, "with your letter to your father about taking orders, and liked the proposal well; but it is an unhappiness almost peculiar to our family, that your father and I seldom think alike. I approve the disposition of your mind, and think the sooner you are a deacon the better. . . . God Almighty direct and bless you!" Mr. Wesley, however, soon yielded to the stronger mind of his wife, and wrote, advising his son to seek Holy Orders without delay. John Wesley's own conduct cannot be so well described as in his own words:—

"When I was about twenty-two my father pressed me to enter into Holy Orders. At the same time, the providence of God directing me to Kempis' *Christian Pattern*, I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, angry at Kempis for being too strict, though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. Meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till

now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement; I communicated every week; I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at, and to pray for, inward holiness; so that now, doing so much and living so good a life, I doubted not that I was a good Christian."

The last sentence is of course ironical; but is it not right in this case to defend John Wesley against John Wesley? While thoroughly believing in the reality and importance of a later change, can any one deny that from this time forward to the very close of his long life, John Wesley led a most holy, devoted life, aiming only at the glory of God, the welfare of his own soul, and the benefit of his fellow-creatures? and if that is not to be a good Christian, what is? His mother gave him, as usual, excellent advice about the *De Imitatione*, and also advised him to read another devotional work, now little known, but well worth reading, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, by Scougal, a clergyman of the Scotch Episcopal Church, which John Wesley loved. Most interesting letters also passed between mother and son, and father and son, about such subjects as the minatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, the thorny question of Predestination, and other difficult points. The upshot was, that John Wesley was ordained deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, in the September Ember week, 1725.

CHAPTER III.

LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

On March 17, 1726, John Wesley was elected Fellow of Lincoln College, on the Lincolnshire foundation. He owed his success chiefly to the interest made by his father and others with Dr. Morley, rector of the college, to whom he always acknowledged a deep debt of gratitude; but he certainly might have been elected on his merits, if such had been the custom of those days. There was, however, an examination of some kind; for his father writes to him in the preceding summer—"Study hard, lest your opponents beat you." These opponents or their friends tried to make capital out of his serious behaviour, but in vain. His election threw a gleam of light upon the somewhat gloomy life of his worthy father, who addressed him exultingly on March 21st, as "Dear Mr. Fellow-elect of Lincoln" (the expression "Fellow-elect" refers to the fact that at first a man is only elected probationary Fellow); and on April 1st wrote—"What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God only knows—*sed passi graciora.* Wherever I am, my Jack is Fellow of Lincoln."

John Wesley's connection with Lincoln College lasted for more than a quarter of a century. "Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College" is the designation by which he

describes himself in the title-page of all his works. He frequently refers to the college with pleasure and gratitude, and he was deeply and permanently influenced in more respects than one by his connection with it.

"Lincoln" is only the popular name, its proper designation being "Collegium Beatæ Virginis Mariæ et Omnium Sanctorum Lincolniense." The last epithet was added because it was founded by a Bishop of Lincoln, Richard Fleming, in 1427, and its resources greatly augmented by another Bishop of Lincoln, Thomas Rotheram, who was afterwards Archbishop of York and Lord High Chancellor of England.[1] It differed from other colleges, inasmuch as it was to be exclusively a college of theologians, "a college of divines," says John Wesley himself, "(so our statutes express it,) founded to overturn all heresies, and defend the Catholic Faith," which, being interpreted, means that it was founded for the express purpose of putting down the Lollards, whose increasing influence alarmed Bishop Fleming. It was the duty of the individual members of the college to preach against Lollardism throughout the huge diocese of Lincoln.

Lincoln, though a small and comparatively poor college, has always held its own among its statelier and richer sisters in the University. In the seventeenth century it had numbered among its Fellows men who had been distinguished both by learning and by piety of a pronounced Anglican type. One of the very best of the Bishops of Lincoln, Robert Sanderson, had been Fellow of Lincoln for thirteen years (1606—1619), and his college lectures as "Reader of Logic in

[1] The Bishop of Lincoln for the time being was always to be *ex officio* visitor.

the House" had been the standard work on Logic at Oxford until they were superseded by the far inferior manual of Dean Aldrich. Though more than a hundred years had elapsed between the resignation of Robert Sanderson and the election of John Wesley, the fragrance of so great a name may still have lingered about the college.

Passing from the earlier to the later part of the seventeenth century, we find the Rector of Lincoln College, Dr. Marshall, amongthe foremost of the Churchmen who helped to revive Church principles after the Restoration. Then, a little later, that staunch Churchman and most able and learned man, George Hickes, was among the Fellows of Lincoln College; and his friend, John Kettlewell, saintliest as well as soundest of English Churchmen. The good Bishop also who ordained John Wesley, Dr. Potter, had been a Fellow of Lincoln College; and the Lincolnshire Fellowship to which John Wesley was elected had been vacated by John (afterwards Sir John) Thorold, scion of a very ancient and aristocratic family, and known in the family as "the good Sir John,"[1] a very pious man. And

[1] The following information has been kindly supplied to the present writer by Dr. Trollope, Bishop of Nottingham, who is great-grandson to this Sir John Thorold, on his grandmother's side, as Dr. Thorold, Bishop of Rochester, is on his father's side.

"Sir John Thorold of Marston and Syston, eighth baronet, entered Lincoln at the age of eighteen, and resigned his Fellowship there, May 3rd, 1725. He was afterwards a friend of Wesley, and is thus described in a letter to the Honourable Grace Granville, daughter of Lord Lansdown, dated November 1st, 1738, and sent from Windsor to Miss Ann Granville, Mrs. Delany's sister.

"According to your desire, I have inquired after our new 'Star of Righteousness.' He does deserve in every particular the character you give him. His name is Thorold; he has at present a very plentiful fortune, £3000 (that is, per annum), will have £10,000 after his father's death. He has a wife and five children, preaches

among those who were actual Fellows with John Wesley, but very much his senior, was Richard Hutchins, who became an Oxford Methodist, and was afterwards known as "the Methodist Rector." Hence there would be, to say the least, a tradition of learning and piety about the college when Wesley was elected. Wesley's own incidental remarks fully bear out this theory. Speaking in 1756 of the chapel service at Trinity College, Dublin, he says—"I never saw so much decency at any chapel in Oxford; no, not even at Lincoln College;" and writing to his brother Samuel soon after his election, he says—"As far as I have ever observed, I never knew a college besides ours whereof the members were so perfectly satisfied with one another; and so inoffensive to the other part of the University. All I have yet seen of the Fellows are both well-natured and well-bred; men admirably disposed as well to preserve peace and good neighbourhood among themselves, as to promote it wherever else they have any acquaintance."

Wesley seems to have made an equally good impression upon his brother Fellows, as appears from the following letter from one of them:—

"*Lincoln College, Dec. 28th*, 1727.

"SIR,

"Yesterday I had the satisfaction of receiving your kind and obliging letter, whereby you have given

twice a week (Monday and Friday), reads a chapter, explains every verse. He has got a young gentleman from Oxford to live with him, who follows his example."

To this it may be added, that on Mr. Thorold's resigning his Fellowship, he restored all the money that he had received from it to the college. He preached in connection with the Moravian brotherhood. Several letters from him to John Wesley are extant.

me a singular instance of that goodness and civility which is essential to your character, and strongly confirmed to me the many encomiums which are given of you in this respect by all who have the happiness to know you. This makes me infinitely desirous of your acquaintance. And when I consider those shining qualities which I hear daily mentioned in your praise, I cannot but lament the great misfortune we all suffer in the absence of so agreeable a person from the college. But I please myself with the thoughts of seeing you here on Chapter-day, and of the happiness we shall have in your company in the summer.

"Your most obliged and most humble servant,

"LEW. FENTON."

This is anticipating; but the letter is inserted here to show that we must not take quite literally some of the observations which Wesley makes about himself.

With his newly-awakened earnestness, he found no sympathizers among his acquaintance at Oxford. "Even their harmless conversation so-called," he says, "damped all my good resolutions. I saw no possible way of getting rid of them unless it should please God to remove me to another college. He did so, in a manner contrary to all human expectation. I was elected Fellow of a college where I knew not one person;" and he determined to know none except those who were walking on the same road as himself. But the letter of Mr. Fenton, written after Wesley had been Fellow for a year and a half, shows that we are not to gather from this that he became an ascetic and a recluse. Nor, though he henceforth considered everything in subordination to the one thing needful, did he fall into the

foolish error of despising human learning. On the contrary, he mapped out his time so methodically that he was able to embrace a most wide and varied range of studies. Monday and Tuesday were to be devoted to Greek and Latin; Wednesday to logic and ethics; Thursday to Hebrew and Arabic; Friday to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturday to oratory and poetry; Sunday to divinity.

In the October term of 1726 he was in harness at Lincoln College, being appointed Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes. These appointments have been strangely misunderstood; perhaps a Lincoln man may be allowed to explain them. Greek lecturer does not mean teacher of Greek generally; it is a technical term, the explanation of which illustrates what has been written above respecting the tradition of piety as well as learning which belonged to Lincoln College. The object was to secure some sort of religious instruction to all the undergraduates; and for this purpose a special officer was appointed, with the modest stipend of £20 a year, who was to hold a lecture every week in the College Hall, which all the undergraduates were to attend, on the Greek Testament. As became a learned society, the lecture was to be on the original language, but the real object was to teach divinity, not Greek.

The duty of "Moderator of the Classes" was to sit in the college hall, and preside over the "Disputations" which were held at Lincoln College every day in the week except Sunday. Bishop Rotheram lays great stress upon these disputations in his Statutes for the College, and gives minute directions as to how they are to be conducted; it will be remembered that John Locke found "Disputations" prevalent at Christ Church

seventy years before, and lamented the "unprofitableness of these verbal niceties." John Wesley seems to have thought otherwise, at any rate so far as the moderator himself was concerned. The plan was this: a thesis was proposed; the disputants argued on one side or the other; the moderator had to listen to the arguments, and then to decide with whom the victory lay. "I could not avoid," says Wesley, "acquiring thereby some degree of expertness in arguing, and especially in discovering and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art."

Wesley had only been three terms at Lincoln, when he was called away to another duty which would assuredly be sacred in his eyes. His father was growing old, and the duties of his two parishes, Epworth and Wroote, were so heavy that he felt he must have a curate upon whom he could thoroughly depend; and who was so fitting as his son John? Mrs. Wesley was equally anxious that John should return home; and the wishes of the two were—as they ought to have been—law to John Wesley. So from the summer of 1727 to the autumn of 1729 we find him again in the Isle of Axholme, at Epworth or Wroote, living for the most part at the latter place, but officiating sometimes at one and sometimes at the other. That Wesley was an earnest and active parish clergyman goes without saying; he tells us himself that "he took some pains with this people," and his father speaks of "the dear love they bore him." But it is also clear that this, the sole experience he ever had in England of work as a parish priest, did not at all commend to him the parochial system.

He made visits now and then to his beloved Oxford during these two years—once to vote at an election, another time to be ordained priest in 1728. There is little to be said about this period; no doubt he felt it a comfort to be able to help his father, but that was all. He was not in his element; and, what is rather curious, there is not the slightest trace of his attempting to carry out the Church system in all its fulness as he afterwards did in Georgia. The church arrangements at Epworth and Wroote seem to have all been after the old-fashioned style of the eighteenth century. Doubtless respect for his father would have deterred him from making any radical change, even if he had desired to do so; but I am inclined to think that he himself had not as yet realized what he afterwards considered of so great importance; he was simply a high and dry Churchman of the old school; and influences were brought to bear upon him on his return to Oxford which he had never yet felt.

That return was in consequence of a summons from Dr. Morley, the rector of his college. It came, as Wesley intimates, unexpectedly. "I was," he writes in 1745, "safe, as I supposed, in a little country town, when I was required to return to Oxford without delay, to take the charge of some young gentlemen, by Dr. Morley, the only man then in England to whom I could deny nothing." Dr. Morley's letter was kind, but firm. "We hope," he says, "it may be as much to your advantage to reside at college as where you are, if you take pupils, or can get a curacy in the neighbourhood of Oxon. Your father may certainly have another curate, though not so much to his satisfaction; yet we are persuaded that this will not move him to hinder your return to

college, since the interest of college and obligation to statute requires it."

Accordingly, in the autumn of 1729, Wesley returned to Lincoln College, resuming his old office of Greek Lecturer, and taking other college work. It should be noted that the office of college tutor, as now understood, did not then exist; and that the private tutor then differed widely from what irreverent undergraduates now term "a coach." If he were a conscientious man, he considered himself responsible for the moral as well as the intellectual training of his pupils; Dr. Morley, with his wonted kindness, placed eleven pupils under Wesley's charge, and it is almost needless to say that Wesley took the highest standard of duty in his relations to them. From several who were his private pupils in this sense from 1729 to 1735, we have strong and even enthusiastic testimony to the effect that he was not only an able and conscientious, but also a most kind and considerate tutor. Many years later, he tells us that in those days the undergraduates used to stay at college all the year round, and that he should as soon have thought of committing a highway robbery, as of failing to give them instruction six days in every week. The testimony of James Hervey, John Whitelamb, and others fully bears out this account of his diligence.

But it is not as lecturer or tutor or moderator that John Wesley's career at Oxford from 1729 to 1735 is most interesting. When he returned to the University he found established one of those little societies or clubs for mutual edification which at all times have been very common.

Little, no doubt, did the club which John Wesley

now joined, dream that their small meetings would become world-renowned. They were "The Oxford Methodists," and the formation of this society is the first instance of what hereafter we shall frequently have to notice, viz. that John Wesley was the originator of scarcely anything that is specially connected with his name, but that all arose either from apparently accidental circumstances, or from the suggestions of others. Strictly speaking, Charles Wesley, not John, was the Founder of Methodism; if we date the commencement, as John Wesley almost invariably does, from 1729, not from 1739. Nothing could be more simple and natural than its origin. Charles Wesley had now been a Westminster student at Christ Church for some three years. During his brother's absence in Lincolnshire he had become deeply impressed with the vital importance of religion, and, like John, had devoted himself to a strictly religious life. What was more natural than that he should gather round him a small band of like-minded young men, who should meet together for mutual improvement, both spiritual and intellectual? On week-days they read the classics, on Sundays divinity; they attended most punctually all the means of grace, especially the Holy Communion,—and that was all. It was also quite natural that when John Wesley joined them he should take the lead; his age, his experience, his University position, his superior learning, and, above all, the ascendancy which he had always exercised over his younger brother, made this a matter of course.

Accordingly, in John Wesley's rooms at Lincoln College, which tradition points out as the first-floor rooms on the south or right-hand side of the first

quadrangle, shaded by the famous Lincoln vine,[1] and opposite the clock-tower, "in November 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford—Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton College—began to spend some evenings together in reading chiefly the Greek Testament." Mr. Morgan was the first who combined with this practical work. "In the summer of 1730," writes Wesley, "Mr. Morgan told me he had called at the gaol, to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife; and that, from the talk he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good if any one would be at the pains of now and then speaking with them. This he so frequently repeated, that on the 24th of August, 1730, my brother and I walked with him to the Castle. We were so well satisfied with our conversation there, that we agreed to go thither once or twice a week; which we had not done long, before he desired me to go with him to see a poor woman in the town who was sick. In this employment too, when we came to reflect upon it, we believed it

[1] An anecdote is preserved in the old MS. Statutes of Bishop Rotheram, which is worth quoting in connection with the Lincoln vine:—"They say that when, according to custom, in the visitation of his diocese, Bishop Rotheram had come to Oxford, a certain one of the Fellows of Lincoln College, or perhaps the Rector, Fristhorpe, exhorted him in a sermon preached before him, to finish the College, taking his text, Psalm lxxx. 14, 15—'Behold and visit this vine, and perfect it which Thy right hand hath planted,'—with which words he so moved the Bishop, that straightway he answered the preacher that he would do that which he sought."—I am a little doubtful, however, as to whether Wesley's vine is *the* Lincoln vine; but the subject, though interesting to a Lincoln man, is not of sufficient general interest to be discussed here.

would be worth while to spend an hour or two in a week, provided the minister of the parish, in which any such person was, was not against it. But that we might not depend wholly upon our own judgments, I wrote an account to my father of our whole design; withal begging that he, who had lived seventy years in the world, and seen as much of it as most private men have ever done, would advise us whether we had yet gone too far, and whether we should now stand still or go forward."

The father replied (Sept. 21, 1730), "As to your designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *Valde probo*, and that I have the highest reason to bless God that He has given me two sons together in Oxford, to whom He has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil? . . . You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. Morgan, who I see in the foremost difficult service is ready to break the ice for you. I think I must adopt him as my son, together with you and your brother Charles; and when I have such a Ternion to prosecute that war, wherein I am now *miles emeritus*, I shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate!" After some other excellent advice, he says, "Go on, then, in God's name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you. For when I was an undergraduate at Oxford, I visited those in the Castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day." He then counsels him to "walk as prudently as he can, though not fearfully," to gain the approbation of the proper authorities, and signs himself "your most affectionate and joyful father."

Other letters followed, and John Wesley felt and expressed the greatest satisfaction in having his father's approval. The four (for Mr. Kirkham was also with them) went steadily on "in spite of the ridicule which increased fast upon them during the winter." They were also joined the same year by John Gambold of Christ Church, and in 1732 by John Clayton of Brasenose, Benjamin Ingham of Queen's, Thomas Broughton of Exeter, and Westley Hall of Lincoln. James Hervey of Lincoln, an attached pupil of John Wesley, joined them in 1733. John Kinchin, Fellow of Corpus, John Whitelamb of Lincoln, and Richard Hutchins, Fellow, afterwards Rector, of Lincoln, also joined; and then a poor servitor of Pembroke, who had never been in such grand company before, but who in later years became *the* one whose name was even more prominently connected by his contemporaries with Methodism than that of John Wesley himself—George Whitefield. All the members of the little society were the staunchest of staunch Churchmen; they kept scrupulously all the Fasts of the Church, including every Wednesday and every Friday; they made a point of communicating every Sunday and every Festival; they spent upon themselves only sufficient money for bare subsistence, exercising the severest self-denial, and giving away all they could in charity; they visited the poor and sick in their homes, the prisoners in the Castle, and the poor debtors in Bocardo; they paid for the education of poor children, and educated some themselves.

But John Wesley shall describe the movement in his own words. On laying the foundation of "the new Chapel, near the City Road, London," April 21, 1777, he thus refers to "the rise of the extraordinary

work God had wrought in England":—"In the year 1725 a young student at Oxford was much affected by reading Kempis' *Christian Pattern*, and Bishop Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. He found an earnest desire to live according to those rules, and to flee from the wrath to come. He sought for some that would be his companions in the way, but could find none; so that for several years he was constrained to travel alone, having no man either to guide or to help him. But in the year 1729 he found one who had the same desire. They then endeavoured to help each other, and, in the close of the year, were joined by two more. They soon agreed to spend two or three hours together every Sunday evening. Afterwards they sat two evenings together, and in a while, six evenings in the week, spending that time in reading the Scriptures, and provoking one another to love and to good works. The regularity of their behaviour gave occasion to a young gentleman of the college to say, 'I think we have got a new set of *Methodists*,'—alluding to a set of physicians who began to flourish at Rome about the time of Nero, and continued for several ages.[1] The name was new and quaint; it clave to them immediately; and from that time both those four young gentlemen, and all that had any religious connection with them, were distinguished by the name of *Methodists*. In the four or five years following, another and another were added to the

[1] But Charles Wesley says that the name of Methodist "was bestowed upon himself and his friends because of their strict conformity to the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the University," and this seems to me a much more likely explanation; for what would a giddy undergraduate know about a sect of physicians in the reign of Nero? In another passage John Wesley also gives this as an alternative explanation.

number, till in the year 1735 there were fourteen of them who constantly met together. Three of these were tutors in their several colleges; the rest Bachelors of Arts or undergraduates. They were all precisely of one judgment, as well as of one soul; all tenacious of order to the last degree, and observant, for conscience' sake, of every rule of the Church, and every statute both of the University and of their respective colleges. They were all orthodox in every point, firmly believing, not only the Three Creeds, but whatsoever they judged to be the doctrine of the Church of England, as contained in her Articles and Homilies. As to that practice of the Apostolic Church (which continued till the time of Tertullian, at least in many Churches), the having all things in common, they had no rule, nor any formed design concerning it; but it was so in effect, and it could not be otherwise, for none could want anything that another could spare. This was the infancy of the work. They had no conception of anything that would follow. Indeed, they took 'no thought for the morrow,' desiring only to live to-day."

When John Wesley says, "A young gentleman of the college" nicknamed the Methodists, he does not mean his own college. A Lincoln man may be pardoned for remarking with satisfaction, that Lincoln had nothing to do with the feeble jokes which were made upon these good, earnest youths. Christ Church and Merton must divide the honour between them. The Holy Club, Bible Bigots, Bible Moths, Sacramentarians, Supererogation men, Methodists,—all these titles were invented by the fertile brains of "the wits" to cast opprobrium, as they thought, but really to confer honour, upon a perfectly inoffensive little band of young men who

only desired to *be* what they and their opponents were alike *called*—Christians. An Oxford man may indeed blush for his University when he reflects that these young men could not even attend the highest service of the Church without running the gauntlet of a jeering rabble principally composed of men who were actually being prepared for the sacred ministry of that Church.

In the last part of his account John Wesley touches upon a point which is really the most important and interesting feature of this period of his career. He refers to the Primitive Church; and it seems to me that it was during these years at Oxford that the idea first gained a hold upon his mind which it never lost, of modelling all his doctrines and practice after that pattern. It is a far cry from Ritualism (so-called) to Methodism (so-called); but it is not fancy, but plain historical fact, that Wesley derived his ideas about the Mixed Chalice, Prayers for the Faithful Departed, and the observance of the Stations, from precisely the same source from whence he derived his ideas about the Class-meeting, the Love-feast, the Watch-night, and the tickets of membership; and they date from this period. He had hitherto been content to take the Church of England just as it was in the eighteenth century. He now went back hundreds of years, to the times when Christianity was in its infancy; and henceforward through all his long life he never ceased to refer everything to those early days. Let us see how this came about. Among the Oxford Methodists one of the least known, but one who exercised by far the deepest and most permanent influence over John Wesley, was John Clayton. He was a Hulmeian Exhibitioner, and afterwards tutor, of Brasenose, and he was also a nonjuror and a Jacobite.

He encouraged him to study more thoroughly than he had ever done before the lives and writings of the early Fathers, and he probably introduced him to a still more able and distinguished man than himself, who took precisely the same line, Thomas Deacon, "the most unworthy of Primitive Bishops," as he is termed in his epitaph. The subject is so important in connection with John Wesley's mental history, that some extracts from Clayton's letters may be fitly inserted. In July 1733 he writes—"As to your question about Saturday, I can only answer it by giving an account of how I spend it. I do not look upon it as a preparation for Sunday, but as a festival itself; and therefore I have continued festival prayer for the three primitive hours, and for morning and evening, from the Apostolical Constitutions, which, I think, I communicated to you whilst at Oxford. I look upon Friday as my preparation for the celebration of both the Sabbath [that is, of course, Saturday] and the Lord's Day; the first of which I observe much like a common saint's day, or as one of the inferior holidays of the Church. I bless God I have generally contrived to have the Eucharist celebrated on Saturdays as well as other holidays, for the use of myself and the sick people whom I visit. Dr. Deacon gives his humble service to you, and lets you know that the worship and discipline of the primitive Christians have taken up so much of his time, that he has never read the Fathers with a particular view to their moral doctrines, and therefore cannot furnish you with the testimonies you want out of his collection. However, if you will give me a month's time, I will try what I can do for you. I have made some progress in the earliest authors, and should have made more had I

not beeu interrupted; first with the public ceremony of the bishop's triennial visitation; and secondly, with the blessing of a visit which the truly primitive Bishop of Man [that is, Bishop Wilson] made to our town [Manchester], with both which affairs the clergy have been wholly taken up for a week. I was at Dr. Deacon's when your letter came to hand, and we had a deal of talk about your scheme of avowing yourselves a society, and fixing upon a set of rules. The Doctor seemed to think you had better let it alone, for to what end would it serve? It would be an additional tie upon yourselves, and perhaps a snare for the consciences of those weak brethren that might chance to come among you. Observing the Stations and weekly communion are duties which stand upon a much higher footing than a rule of a society; and they who can set aside the command of God and the authority of His Church, will hardly, I doubt, be tied by the rules of a private society. As to the mixture, Mr. Colly told me he would assure me it was constantly used at Christ Church. However, if you have reason to doubt it, I would have you to inquire; but I cannot think the want of it a reason for not communicating. If I could receive when the mixture was used I would; and therefore I used to prefer the Castle to Christ Church; but if not, I should not think myself any further concerned in the matter than as it might be some way or other in my power to get it restored."

This letter shows how anxiously Wesley was now studying the history of the Early Church. His questions about the proper way of spending the Sabbath as well as the Lord's Day (the early Christians often observed

both), about the moral doctrines of the Fathers, about the mixed chalice, which John Wesley seems to have thought not only lawful but necessary,—an idea which quite accords with the undoubted practice of the Early Church,—show plainly enough what was the bent of his mind.

Six weeks later followed another letter from Mr. Clayton, in which he dwells upon the Epistles of St. Clement, St. Ignatius and St. Barnabas, Hermas' Pastor, and the Apostolical Constitutions. And then, referring evidently to some anxious inquiries of Wesley, "How," he writes, "shall I direct my instructor in the school of Christ? or teach you, who am but a babe in religion? However, I must be free to tell you my sentiments of what you inquire about. On Wednesday and Friday, I have for some time used the Office for Passion week out of *Spinckes' Devotions*, and bless God for it. . . . Refer your last question to Mr. Law. I dare not give directions for spending that time which I consume in bed; nor teach you, who rise at four, while I indulge myself in sleep till five."

Nathaniel Spinckes was a pious nonjuror, and his *Devotions* are a collection in the very spirit of the early Church. The last sentence introduces us to another name which will always be associated with that of John Wesley. William Law was, of course, a nonjuror and staunch Churchman. Both the Wesleys had been deeply impressed with his *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call*, and had made his personal acquaintance. They paid several visits to him at Putney, where he was in the house of Mr. Gibbon as tutor to his son. All these visits were for the sake of religious guidance, and Mr. Law was "a sort of oracle" to Mr.

Wesley; he was highly valued also by other Oxford Methodists, one of whom, Mr. Ingham, terms him "a divine man."

The two others of the little band who were certainly the highest in University standing were Mr. Kinchin, Fellow of Corpus, and Mr. Hutchins, Fellow of Lincoln. Mr. Kinchin took a country living, Dummer in Hampshire, and there strove to present the Church's system in all its fullness to the people; Mr. Hutchins has left behind him one sermon (*Concio ad clerum*), in which he advocates the most strictly sacramental interpretation of the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. These would be the Methodists who would influence John Wesley most. But for a picture of him as he was in his capacity of "Curator of the Holy Club" we must turn to another of the band, Mr. Gambold, from whose long and extremely interesting description, written when Wesley was in Georgia, the following extracts are taken:—

"Mr. Wesley, late of Lincoln College, has been the instrument of so much good to me, that I shall never forget him. Could I remember him as I ought, it would have very near the same effect as if he was still present; for a conversation so unreserved as was his, so zealous in engaging his friends to every instance of Christian piety, has left now nothing new to be said." Then he describes how, "about the middle of March 1730," he became acquainted with "Mr. Charles Wesley of Christ Church;" and after dwelling upon his own spiritual difficulties, proceeds:—"After some time he introduced me to his brother John, of Lincoln College. 'For,' said he, 'he is somewhat older than I, and can resolve your doubts better.' This, as I found afterwards,

was a thing which he was deeply sensible of; for I never observed any person have a more real deference for another than he constantly had for his brother. Indeed, he followed his brother entirely. Could I describe one of them, I should describe both." After explaining the nature of the little society he says—"Mr. John Wesley was always the chief manager, for which he was very fit, for he not only had more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blest with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none. What proposals he made to any were sure to charm them, because he was so much in earnest; nor could they afterwards slight them, because they saw him always the same. What supported this uniform vigour was, the care he took to consider well of every affair before he engaged in it, making all his decisions in the fear of God, without passion, humour, or self-confidence; for though he had naturally a very clear apprehension, yet his exact prudence depended more on humanity and singleness of heart. To this I may add, that he had, I think, something of authority in his countenance; though, as he did not want address, he could soften his manner, and point it as occasion required. Yet he never assumed anything to himself above his companions. Any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his were by them." The meetings "at his chamber or one of the others," the visits to the poor, the prisons, the schools, and the workhouse, the endeavours to influence for good "the younger members of the University," are then described, and the writer adds: "Though some practices of Mr. Wesley and his friends were much blamed,—as their

fasting on Wednesday and Friday, after the custom of the Primitive Church,—their coming on those Sundays when there was no sacrament in their own colleges, to receive it at Christchurch—yet nothing was so disliked as these charitable employments. They seldom took any notice of the accusations brought against them; but if they made any reply, it was commonly such a plain and simple one, as if there was nothing more in the case, but that they had heard such doctrines of their Saviour, and believed and done accordingly."[1]

Then follows a defence of Wesley's conduct as "Curator." "What I would chiefly remark upon is, the manner in which Mr. Wesley directed his friends. Because he required such a regulation of our studies as might devote them all to God, he has been cried out upon as one that discouraged learning. Far from that; the first thing he struck at in young men was that indolence which would not submit to close thinking." It is unnecessary to repeat in Mr. Gambold's words what has already been said respecting the doings of the Society; but there is a personal matter on which he represents Wesley in so very different a light from that in which he is sometimes regarded that it should be noticed. "If any one," he writes, "could have provoked him, I should; for I was slow in coming into his measures, and very remiss in doing my part. I frequently contradicted his assertions; or, which is much the same, distinguished upon them. I hardly ever

[1] The unpopularity of the Oxford Methodists was increased by the premature death of Mr. Morgan, who was falsely represented as having destroyed his health by his ascetic practices. His father thought so at first, and was very angry; but John Wesley convinced him that this was not the case.

submitted to his advice at the time he gave it, though I relented afterwards. One time he was in fear that I had taken up notions that were not safe, and pursued my spiritual improvement in an erroneous, because inactive, way. So he came over and stayed with me near a week. He accosted me with the utmost softness, condoled with me the incumbrances of my constitution, heard all that I had to say, endeavoured to pick out my meaning, and yielded to me as far as he could. I never saw more humility in him than at this time. It was enough to cool the warmest imaginations that swell an overweening heart. It was, indeed, his custom to humble himself most before the proud, not to reproach them; but, in a way of secret intercession, to procure their pardon.

"He had not only friends in Oxford to assist, but a good many correspondents. He set apart one day in the week, at the least—and he was no slow composer—for writing letters; in which, without levity or affectation, but with plainness and fervour, he gave his advice in particular cases, and vindicated the strict original sense of the Gospel precepts."[1]

And this is the man who a few years later affirmed that in his Oxford days he was not a Christian! But in his old age he thought differently. "I often cry out," he writes in 1772, "*Vitæ me redde priori!* Let me be again an Oxford Methodist. I am often in doubt whether it would not be best for me to resume all my Oxford rules, great and small. I did then walk closely

[1] See *The Oxford Methodists*, by the Rev. L. Tyerman. This is the fullest and best account we possess of this interesting little body of men; but the writer is of course quite out of sympathy with their principles. Could not some Oxford resident, in sympathy with the movement, write something about it?

with God, and redeem the time. But what have I been doing these thirty years?"

Wesley's six, or rather, off and on, ten years' residence at Oxford, left a marked influence upon his character. In a way that is exceedingly difficult to define, one can trace the University man in him all through his life. The *genius loci* affected him, and one can quite understand what he means when he says nearly fifty years later (1781), "I love the very sight of Oxford; but," he adds, "my prejudice in its favour is considerably abated; I do not admire it as I once did." He owed, however, very much to his training there. What was said above of the public school is still more true of a great University like Oxford. It gives a man a larger way of looking at men, books, and things in general, which is clearly distinguishable in John Wesley. The College Don frequently appears in his dealings with his followers; and, if one may read between the lines, traces of the influence of the college may frequently be found in his writings. Is it fanciful, for instance, to suppose that his love of the Festival of All Saints had something to do with its being the great day at Lincoln College—or rather, "The College of the Blessed Virgin Mary and All Saints," "quod vulgo vocatur Lincoln College"? On All Saints' Day all the Fellows were present at morning chapel, and the Senior Fellow read the First Lesson and the Junior the second (it was the wrong order, but we did not understand much about ritual in those days), and all the benefactors of the college from Richard Fleming and Thomas Rotheram downwards were duly commemorated. And then at 11 a.m we all walked in solemn procession to All Saints' Church, which was originally the College Chapel, the Rector and

Fellows leading the way, all surpliced, and then the scholars, also surpliced, and then the exhibitioners, and then the commoners—the wrong order again. And a special sermon was preached by the Rector or one of the Fellows, and then the procession returned in the same order. All this went on, according to statute, in Wesley's time. Can one help thinking that it was impressed, though perhaps unconsciously, upon his mind when he wrote—

"1756, November 1, was a day of triumphant joy, as All Saints' Day generally is. How superstitious are they who scruple giving God solemn thanks for the lives and deaths of His Saints!

"1767, November 1. Being All Saints' Day (a Festival I dearly love), I could not but observe the admirable propriety with which the Collect, Epistle and Gospel are suited to each other"?

He always made a point of preaching on "The Communion of Saints" on All Saints' Day. He thoroughly realized the doctrine of the Intermediate State, and to his dying day used to speak of his departed Christian friends, not as "having gone to heaven," in the popular phraseology, but as being in Paradise, or in Abraham's bosom.

His attachment to Oxford was strongly brought out by a dilemma in which he found himself in the year 1734. The health of the Rector of Epworth was obviously failing, and he was naturally anxious that one of his sons should succeed him, so that the old home might not be broken up. Samuel was, of course, the one first thought of. As early as Feb. 28, 173$\frac{2}{3}$, his father wrote to him, expressing his wish to resign Epworth, "provided you could make an interest to

have it in my room." "My first and best reason for it," he adds, "is, because I am persuaded you would serve God and His people here better than I have done; though, thanks be to God, after near forty years' labour among them, they grow better, I having had above one hundred at my last Sacrament, whereas I have had less than twenty formerly. My second reason relates to yourself, taken from gratitude, or rather from plain honesty. You have been a father to your brothers and sisters, especially to the former, who have cost you great sums in their education, both before and since they went to the University. Neither have you stopped here; but have showed your pity to your mother and me in a very liberal manner, wherein your wife joined with you when you did not over-much abound yourselves, and have ever done noble charities to my children's children." The Wesleys generally, and John Wesley in particular, had reason to be grateful to Samuel; and though the two brothers differed widely as to the later proceedings of the younger, no diminution of their mutual affection resulted.

Samuel had but lately settled at Tiverton, and was naturally unwilling to leave it. Then the two Samuels, father and son, did their utmost to persuade John Wesley to seek the post which in all probability would be too soon vacant. A long and interesting correspondence ensued, in which John gave his father no less than twenty-six reasons why he should not leave Oxford. The elder brother's comment was that he could see in his brother's arguments his love to himself, but could not see his love to his neighbour; and his father wrote in the same tone—"It is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, which

should be our main consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life." His brother then urged that his ordination vow obliged him to undertake parish work, and that he had positively perjured himself if he refused to do so. This was touching John Wesley on a tender point; for, however some may disagree with his sentiments at this period, none can deny that his conscience was most sensitive. His reply was very characteristic—"I own," he writes, "that I am not a proper judge of the oath I took at ordination; so I referred it to 'the high-priest of God,' before whom I contracted that engagement, proposing this single question to him: whether I had, at my ordination, engaged myself to take care of a parish or no? His answer runs in these words—'It doth not seem to me that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the care of any parish, if you can better serve God and His Church elsewhere!' Now that I can as a clergyman better serve God and His Church in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence." John Wesley took a high, but surely not an unreasonably high, estimate of the good he could do at Oxford, in influencing young men at the most pliable and critical epoch of their lives, and especially young men, many of whom were in preparation for the sacred ministry. "Here," he says, "are the schools of the prophets; he who gains one does as much service to the world as he could do in a parish in his whole life; in him are contained all who shall be converted by him; he is not a single drop of the dew of heaven, but a river to make glad the city of God." Moreover, if he desired parish work, he might have it without leaving Oxford. "I do not," he says, "nor ever did, resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. There are four

cures belonging to our college, and consistent with a fellowship. I do not know but I may take one of them at Michaelmas." This was not a mere flourish of words. It is literally true that there are no less than four parochial charges, viz. All Saints' and St. Michael's in Oxford, and Combe Longa and Forest Hill, villages in the neighbourhood, which may be, and often are, held by resident Fellows without resigning their Fellowships. Nor can I see that Wesley laid himself open to the charge of selfishness, when he pleaded that it would be better for his own soul for him to remain at Oxford. Surely to "work out one's own salvation" is a scriptural precept; and his bitterest enemies could not accuse John Wesley of leading a selfish life at Oxford.

However, the earnest pleadings of his father and brother, and no doubt also the mute appeals of his mother and sisters, who must otherwise lose their home, ultimately prevailed. John Wesley consented to accept Epworth, and one of his own pupils and disciples, Mr. Broughton, made interest with those in whose gift Crown livings like Epworth practically lay. The application was unsuccessful; the good old rector died in April 1735, having received the last offices of the Church from his son John, and the living was given to a gentleman who appears never to have resided on his cure. John Wesley's only parish work was done far away from Epworth.

CHAPTER IV.

GEORGIA.

In the year 1732 a Royal charter was granted, for the establishment of a colony "in that part of Carolina which lies from the most northern part of the Savannah river, all along the sea-coast to the southward." A corporation was formed, called *The Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America*—the name being of course given in honour of the reigning monarch. The idea originated with James Edward Oglethorpe, a Member of Parliament, and "a gentleman of unblemished character, brave, generous and humane," who had been educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and had then entered the army. He took a great interest in the relief of unfortunate debtors, and the correction of abuses in the conduct of prisons. He was made chairman of a committee of the House of Commons to visit prisons and to suggest a reform. One great difficulty arose as to what was to become of the released debtors, who through no fault of their own had suffered from the cruel laws then in force. The new colony was to be made a refuge for them; it was thought that it might be beneficial to the mother country as well as to the colonists, since the latter would

protect the southern frontier of Carolina against the inroads of the Indians. Each male inhabitant was to be regarded both as a planter and a soldier; each lot was to be held as a military fief. The colony received an accession from a party of Salzburghers who were driven from their homes on account of their religion by the Roman Catholics. Oglethorpe "gratefully acknowledged the sympathy and valuable co-operation of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the accession of colonists from this source," and saw in it "the rapid conversion of nations, relief from religious persecution, and the increase of the wealth and trade of Great Britain." The religious element was very important in the foundation of the colony. Liberty of conscience was to be allowed universally to all, except Papists, in the worship of God. To the west of the province lay the French, to the south the Spaniards, who were "all Papists." Hence there was great "fear of introducing into the colony persons opposed to the Protestant religion, the maintenance of which was regarded as all important." The native Indians not only gave up all opposition to the scheme, but showed a desire to be instructed in the religion of the white man. Writing of one of their tribes in 1733, General Oglethorpe says—"Their king comes constantly to church, is desirous to be instructed in the Christian religion, and has given me his nephew, a boy who is his next-of-kin, to educate." This king was named Tomo-chi-chi; he was of great assistance to the infant colony, and was evidently quite open to instruction. "We do not," he said, "know good from evil, but desire to be instructed and guided by you that we may do well with, and be regarded amongst, the children of the Trustees." Nor did

he stand alone. Another chief declared that "though they were poor and ignorant, He who had given the English breath, had given them breath also; that He who had made them both, had given more wisdom to the white man; that they were firmly persuaded that the Great Power which dwelt in Heaven and all around" —and then he spread out his hands and lengthened the sound of his words—"and which had given breath to all men, had sent the English thither for the instruction of them, their wives and children." Tomo-chi-chi visited England, and made a great impression here. In fact the whole of the Georgian scheme appealed to the best feelings of the nation, and found many sympathizers. Among these were the two Samuel Wesleys, father and son, the former of whom had a correspondence with Oglethorpe on the subject, in which he declared that had he been ten years younger, he would have joined the colonists himself; while the latter presented a set of communion plate for the church at Savannah.[1]

These details have been dwelt upon at some length, because upon them hinges the whole of John Wesley's future history in Georgia, which really influenced his whole after-life. His ardent imagination was evidently fired by the prospect of a glorious work for God to be wrought among the Indians. And what has been said above shows that this was no unreasonable expectation. "I hope," he said, "to learn the true Gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders

[1] A full and interesting account of the establishment of the Georgian Colony will be found in *The History of Georgia*, by Charles C. Jones, LL.D., 2 vols., Boston, U.S., 1883.

to soften its unpleasing truths. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God, and consequently they shall know of every doctrine I preach, whether it be of God. By these, therefore, I hope to learn the purity of that faith which was once delivered to the saints, the genuine sense and full extent of those laws which none can understand who mind earthly things." "Why, Mr. Wesley, if they are all this already, what more can Christianity do for them?" replied the lady to whom Wesley expressed his glowing anticipations, with something of a lady's logic, for John Wesley based all his hopes upon their *reception* of Christianity. In short, John Wesley's great object in going to Georgia was to be a *missioner* (it is his own word) among the Indians.

The circumstances which led to his appointment were these:—On his father's death he went to London to present the Rector's volume on the Book of Job to Queen Caroline. There he fell in with some of the Georgian Trustees, who were in search of persons who would preach the gospel to the settlers and the Indians. Dr. Burton, an Oxford friend of Wesley's, introduced him to General Oglethorpe as a man eminently qualified for the work. Wesley hesitated, principally on his mother's account. "I am the staff," he said, "of her age, her support and comfort." But he consulted his brother Samuel, and William Law; and made a special journey to Manchester to ask the advice of Mr. Clayton and Dr. Byrom, and then went to Epworth to lay the case before his mother. "Had I twenty sons," was her noble reply, "I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." This settled the matter; but it is a remarkable illustration of the bent of Wesley's

mind, that the only persons he consulted outside his own family in this momentous crisis of his life were Nonjurors and Churchmen of the most advanced type.

John Wesley was sent out as a missionary by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, with a stipend of £50 a year. With his characteristic disregard for money, he purposed to refuse the stipend, and live wholly on his Fellowship. But the prudent Samuel prevented him from doing this, very properly arguing that it would be unfair to his successor, and that if he did not require the stipend for his own use he might spend it in doing good. His brother Charles determined to go out with him in the capacity of secretary to the Governor. Two other young men joined them—Benjamin Ingham, the Oxford Methodist, to whom Wesley wrote in his own curt way, "Fast and pray; and then send me word whether you dare go with me to the Indians"; and Charles Delamotte, the son of a London merchant, "who had a mind to leave the world, and give himself up entirely to God." The spirit in which they went forth is thus described by Wesley himself—"Our end in leaving our native country was not to avoid want (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings), nor to gain the dung and dross of riches and honour; but singly this, to save our souls; to live wholly to the glory of God."

Their manner of life on board ship shows how steadily from the very first they kept this end in view. "We resolved," writes one of them, "to rise early, and to spend our time regularly and carefully. The first hour we allotted to ourselves, was to pray for ourselves and absent friends. The next, we read the Scriptures; and from six to breakfast we generally read something

relating to the Primitive Church. At eight we had public prayers. The forenoon *I* [Ingham] spent either in teaching and instructing the children, or reading antiquity; *Mr. John Wesley,* in learning German; *Mr. Charles Wesley,* mostly in writing; *Mr. Delamotte,* in learning Greek or Navigation. At twelve we all met together to join in prayer, and to exhort one another, consulting both how to profit our neighbours and ourselves. After dinner I taught the children or conversed religiously with some of the passengers, as also Mr. Wesley constantly did. At four we had public prayer. From five to six we spent in private; then we supped." They afterwards abandoned this luxury. "At seven I read to as many of the passengers as were willing to hear, and instructed them in Christianity. Mr. John Wesley joined with the Moravians in their public devotions. At eight we all met together again, to give an account of what we had done, whom we had conversed with, deliberating on the best method of proceeding with such and such persons; what advice, direction, exhortation, or reproof was necessary for them; and sometimes we read a little, concluding with prayer; and so we went to bed about nine, sleeping soundly upon mats and blankets, regarding neither the noise of the sea or sailors. 'The angels of the Lord are round about them that fear Him.'"

The Moravians mentioned in the above passage were an important factor in John Wesley's mental history. They were twenty-six in number, and were going to join the Georgian colony, having been driven out of their own country on account of their religion. Their simple piety, their humble readiness to do servile work which the English passengers refused to do, and, above

all, their undaunted courage in facing death when a storm arose (their very women and children showing that they were not afraid to die), impressed John Wesley deeply; and all the more so because they seemed to him to be an exact reproduction in the eighteenth century of the early Christians of the first three centuries. "They are," again to quote Mr. Ingham, "more like the Primitive Christians than any other Church now in the world; for they retain both the faith, practice, and discipline delivered by the Apostles. They have regularly ordained bishops, priests, and deacons. Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist are duly administered. Discipline is strictly exercised without respect of persons. They all submit themselves to their pastors, being guided by them in everything. They live together in perfect love and peace, having, for the present, all things in common. They are more ready to serve their neighbours than themselves. In their business they are diligent and industrious; in all their dealings strictly just and conscientious. In everything, they behave themselves with great meekness, sweetness, and humility." One can readily understand how fascinating such a spectacle would be to John Wesley; it appealed to the two dominant feelings of his mind—his love of practical piety, and his love of Church doctrine and discipline. It was to converse with these Moravians that John Wesley set himself, and accomplished, on shipboard the difficult task of learning German. He had, in an eminent degree, that most useful gift of learning new languages with little trouble.

On February 5th, 1736, the vessel after a stormy voyage reached its destination, and John Wesley at once began, we cannot say to put on his harness, for

he had never taken it off, but to work as vigorously for his Divine Master on land as he had never ceased to do on board ship. The newly-raised town of Savannah was his special sphere; but he was more or less responsible for the spiritual guidance of the whole colony of Georgia. His brother Charles had, as we have seen, come merely as the Governor's secretary, much to John Wesley's annoyance. But Charles was now in Holy Orders, and he worked as a clergyman at Frederika, as John did at Savannah. With characteristic promptitude and vigour, John Wesley commenced at Savannah to carry out the Church system in its most pronounced form. He at once established the double daily service and the weekly Communion. On Sundays, he "divided the public prayers according to the original appointment of the Church;" he refused to baptize the child of an influential parishioner except by immersion; he formed a society which met on the evenings of Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday for devotional purposes; he commenced a system of house-to-house visitation, setting apart three hours every day for this work; he preached down the love of fine dress, so that, he says, "I saw neither gold in the church, nor costly apparel, but the congregation in general was almost constantly clothed in plain, clean linen or woollen;" he learnt the Spanish language that he might converse with his Jewish parishioners, his knowledge of languages also enabling him to hold a service in French for those who spoke that tongue, and in Italian for some Vaudois who formed part of the colony; he put a stop to the better class of children jeering at their poorer school-fellows who came to school without shoes and stockings by himself attending the school bare-foot. Ever ready to rush into

the breach, when he found that his brother Charles was in difficulties at Frederika, he changed places with him for a time. Here he was not so successful. At the end of about a month one of the congregation said to him, "I like nothing you do; all your sermons are satires upon particular persons. Besides, we are Protestants; but as for you, we cannot tell what religion you are of. We never heard of such a religion before; we know not what to make of it. And then your private behaviour. All the quarrels that have been since your arrival have been because of you; and there is neither man nor woman in the town minds a word you say." As to knowing what religion he was of, they had only to look into their Prayer-books, and they would have found it described plainly enough. But here the larger question arises, Was the mission in Georgia a failure? Surely not; and in his calmer moods John Wesley himself did not think it was. His own language in Georgia as to the hopefulness of his work is most sanguine.

About a fortnight after his arrival, he wrote to Charles —"I have hitherto no opposition at all; all is smooth, and fair, and promising. Many seem to be awakened; all are full of respect and commendation." About two months later (April 20th, 1736), he wrote to Oglethorpe —"Savannah never was so dear to me as now. I found so little either of the force or power of godliness at Frederika, that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it." On February 16th, 1737, he wrote to a friend at Lincoln College, Oxford—"There is great need that God should put it into the hearts of some to come over to us, and labour with us in this harvest;" and then he owns that the "difficulties we have hitherto met with have been small." On June 15th, 1737, the Trustees

write, expressing their satisfaction with "your endeavours to suppress vice and immorality, and that a reformation gains ground, as you observe it does." On March 28th and 29th, 1737, he wrote two most hopeful letters which are worth quoting, because they show that the popular opinion that John Wesley was an unhappy, disappointed man when he was in Georgia is an utter fallacy. "I entirely agree with you," he writes to Mr. Wogan, "that religion is love and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; that, as it is the happiest, so it is the cheerfullest thing in the world; that it is utterly inconsistent with moroseness, sourness, and indeed with whatever is not according to the softness, sweetness, and gentleness of Christ Jesus. I believe it equally contrary to all preciseness, stiffness, affectation, and unnecessary singularity." And to Mrs. Chapman—"You seem to apprehend that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a social friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavour to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I. Do you refuse no pleasure but what is a hindrance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule"—with much more to the same effect. And finally, in summing up what had been done in Georgia during his ministry, he writes—"All in Georgia have heard the word of God, and some have believed and begun to run well. A few steps have been taken towards publishing the glad tidings both to the African

and American heathens. Many children have learned how they ought to be useful to their neighbour. And those whom it most concerns have an opportunity of knowing the state of their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness for many generations." His friend and successor, Mr. Whitefield, declared—"The good Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people, and he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake. Oh that I may follow him as he has followed Christ!"

Does all this look like a failure? But, it may be asked, how is it that the idea that John Wesley's Georgian mission was a failure has become so prevalent? The answer is, that among those best acquainted with John Wesley's history it is *not* prevalent. But among those who are not so well acquainted, it is quite easy to see how the mistake arose; and John Wesley's own words are to a great extent responsible for it.

In the first place he was, through no fault of his own, disappointed in the object which he had chiefly in view when he left his native land. He went forth to evangelize the Indians, and the project then appeared by no means Quixotic. Their chiefs seemed quite open to instruction, and his first interview with Tomo-chi-chi a few days after his landing was not discouraging. "Ye are welcome," said the chief; "I am glad to see you here. I have a desire to hear the Great Word, for I am ignorant. When I was in England, I desired that some might speak the Great Word to me. Our nation was then willing to hear. Since that time we have been in trouble. The French on one hand, the Spaniards on the other, and the traders that are amongst us, have

caused great confusion, and have set our people against hearing the Great Word. Their tongues are useless; some say one thing, and some another. But I am glad that ye are come. I will assemble the great men of our nation, and I hope, by degrees, to compose our differences; for without their consent I cannot hear the Great Word. However, in the meantime, I shall be glad to see you at my town; and I would have you teach our children. But we would not have them made Christians as the Spaniards make Christians, for they baptize without instruction; but we would hear and be well instructed, and then be baptized when we understood." To which John Wesley replied with characteristic brevity—"God only can teach you wisdom, and if you be sincere, perhaps He will do it by us." One hindrance to the work of evangelizing the Indians is hinted at by the chief; they had of late received so unfavourable an impression of Christianity as presented by the French and Spaniards that they were prejudiced against any further teaching; they had also become embroiled in wars among themselves, and hence were not in a position to hear "the Great Word." And moreover, John Wesley quite unexpectedly found his time preoccupied with work for which he had never bargained. Instead of being a missionary to the heathen, he was forced, by the withdrawal of another clergyman, Mr. Quincy, to become simply the parish priest to the settlers; that is, to do the very work from which he had shrunk at Epworth when he was impelled to it by the strongest and purest of earthly motives, the unanimous wishes of the Wesley family. No wonder that he was disheartened; and, instead of being surprised that he did not accomplish more, one is astonished that he was able

to do so much, considering that the work was uncongenial to him, and that the people among whom he did it were, one would have thought, the very last to sympathize with what would now be called his extremely high Church principles.

Again, his new friends the Moravians unsettled him as to his own spiritual state. Almost immediately after his arrival, one of them subjected him to a cross-examination, which, considering the position and attainments of the respective parties, seems to an outsider, in plain words, rather impertinent. John Wesley however thought far otherwise. He submitted to it humbly and thankfully, and while he taught others in a very authoritative way he was content to attend the Moravian services as a simple learner. The more he saw of them, the more closely they seemed to him to resemble the Primitive Christians. He was present when they elected a Bishop for Georgia, and the proceedings made him "almost forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine himself in one of those assemblies, where Paul the tent-maker or Peter the fisherman presided." Their Christian conduct thoroughly won his heart; but withal, they made him dissatisfied with himself, and they must certainly be regarded as one of the causes why he afterwards wrote so despondingly of his work in Georgia. They were also in some degree responsible for the final fracas which brought his residence in Georgia to an abrupt termination; for he consulted them on a most delicate question connected with his private life, and submissively yielded to their decision. The story is a painful one, but it is illustrative alike of John Wesley's strength and his weakness, and must be briefly told.

Miss Sophia Christina Hopkey, the niece of Mr. Causton, the chief magistrate of the place, was introduced to John Wesley, soon after his arrival, as an anxious inquirer. She frequently consulted him about her spiritual state; she received lessons in French from him; she dressed in simple white, because he abhorred finery; she was a regular member of his congregation at Savannah both on week-day and Sundays; she nursed him through an illness; in fact the intimacy between the two was very close. It was a strictly religious intimacy—of course; but when a handsome young clergyman and an attractive young lady are thus engaged, an engagement of another kind is apt to be the result. Wesley, with a guileless simplicity which one hardly knows whether to be provoked at or to admire, consulted the Moravians as to whether he should marry her or not; and when the answer was unfavourable, meekly replied, "The will of the Lord be done." The lady soon consoled herself by marrying a Mr. Williamson, and here the matter ought to have ended. But unfortunately it did not. Wesley still continued his parochial ministrations to Mrs. Williamson, and the husband, not unnaturally perhaps, objected. Wesley had not a high opinion of Mr. Williamson's piety, and probably thought that he influenced his wife against religion. To cut a long story short, he at last felt it his duty to repel Mrs. Williamson from the Holy Communion, and was prosecuted by her husband for so doing in a Civil Court, whose authority in spiritual matters Wesley, as a staunch Churchman, could not recognize. Then the storm burst. A list of grievances, which reminds one of those of the "aggrieved parishioner" in the present day, was drawn up. They may

be almost all explained by the fact that Wesley strove to model his conduct, both in and out of church, on what he deemed the lines of the Primitive Church. The great majority of the indictments he declared "he could take no cognizance of, they being matters of an ecclesiastical nature;" but he was ready to be tried upon the only one that was of a secular nature. Mr. and Mrs. Williamson now purposed going to England, and Wesley was urged by his friends to go too, lest they should misrepresent him at home. His brother Charles and Mr. Ingham had already left Georgia; and the matter was summarily settled for John by the magistrates of Savannah appointing another clergyman to take his place. So with a heavy heart John Wesley left Georgia for ever; and, being joined by Delamotte, made his way with great difficulty to Charlestown, where he took ship on Dec. 22nd, 1737, and after a stormy voyage reached England once again on Feb. 1st 1738.

On the voyage home, and after his return, he poured forth the bitterness of his soul in language which in after years he felt it necessary to modify, if not retract. "I went to America," he writes, "to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well, but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Alienated as I am from the life of God, I am a child of wrath, an heir of hell." Are we to take such expressions literally? If we are, then we must in common fairness also take literally quite as strong if not stronger language, which he used eight months after he had had "the assurance given him that Christ had taken away his sins." But Wesley himself has left us in no doubt about the matter. To

the assertion that when he went to convert the Indians he was not himself converted, he appended many years later a note, "I am not sure of this"; and to the words, "I am a child of wrath," another note, "I believe not." He explained himself further—"I had even then the faith of a servant, though not that of a son" —a distinction on which he enlarged in one of his sermons, and in other passages of his works. He gives us the clue to explain his use of such strong and, we must add, unguarded expressions, when he calls, in the very paper in which they occur, "inward feeling the most infallible of proofs." This was the weak side of the Moravian teaching, the exaggerated importance they attached to inward feeling, as Wesley himself afterwards found to his sorrow. In a most touching passage in his second letter to Bishop Lavington (1752), who had twitted him with this strange account of his spiritual state in America, he himself deprecates the too literal interpretation of what "was wrote," he says, "in the anguish of my heart, to which I gave vent between God and my own soul." If John Wesley was not a true Christian in Georgia, God help millions of those who profess and call themselves Christians!

CHAPTER V.

THE MORAVIAN INFLUENCE.

JOHN WESLEY'S mind was now clearly ripe for the powerful influence which was brought to bear upon it. He had failed in his cherished project of converting the Indians, and he seems most unjustly to lay the blame upon himself; he had failed also in that calm trust in God which would stand him in stead in the hour of need. The simple Moravians had not been afraid of facing death, but he had been. "I want," he says, "that faith which none can have without knowing it." In this unsettled frame of mind he met with another member of that Moravian brotherhood which had so fascinated him in Georgia. Within a week of his landing at Deal, he was introduced to Peter Böhler, who had just come to England from Germany. Böhler was ten years younger than Wesley, being only twenty-five, but Wesley was, in his hands, like a little child.

He was led on by him step by step, until he reached the consummation for which he had been yearning. But the remarkable history cannot be so well told as in his own words.

"Feb. 7th, 1738 (a day much to be remembered), at the house of Mr. Weinantz, a Dutch merchant, I met

Peter Böhler, Schulius Richter, and Wensel Naiser, just then landed from Germany."

This was in London, and Wesley found the strangers lodgings in Westminster, near Mr. Hutton's. The next meeting was at Oxford, when Böhler said to him, "My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away;" and forthwith commenced the process of purging.

"March 4th. I found my brother [Charles] at Oxford, and with him Peter Böhler; by whom (in the hand of the great God) I was on Sunday the 5th clearly convinced of unbelief; of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved. Immediately it struck into my mind, 'Leave off preaching. How can you preach to others, who have not faith yourself?' I asked Böhler whether he thought I should leave it off or not. He answered, 'By no means.' I asked, 'But what can I preach?' He said, 'Preach faith *till* you have it; and then *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith.' Accordingly, Monday the 6th, I began preaching the new doctrine, though my soul started back from the work." On March 23rd, "I met Peter Böhler again, who now amazed me more and more by the account he gave of the fruits of living faith—the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it." On April 22nd he met Peter Böhler again, who spoke to him about the witness of the Spirit, and about saving faith being given in a moment. Wesley rebelled against this, but consulted his New Testament, and found to his astonishment that "scarce any was so slow as St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth;" he then objected that the times were changed, but Böhler was prepared to meet this objection by producing actual instances. "I

was beat out of this retreat too," writes Wesley, "by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help Thou my unbelief.'" Peter Böhler left England in May, but not till he had sown the seed in Wesley's mind, which was destined to grow up and bear much fruit. The last stage was reached on May 24th, 1738, in a meeting of a Society in Aldersgate Street, "when a person read Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, which teaches what justifying faith is." "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death; and then I testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart." The sum of what Wesley had learnt from Peter Böhler was, that true faith in Christ was inseparably attended by dominion over sin, and constant peace arising from a sense of forgiveness; that that saving faith is given in a moment; and that instantaneously a man is turned from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. In later days Wesley certainly did not insist upon the instantaneousness of the change, and indeed his own experience did not altogether bear out the theory.

It was not till several months had elapsed that he was finally settled. He tells us of being "troubled, and in heaviness"; of "grieving the spirit of God"; of "a want of joy"; of his not being able to "find in himself the love of God or of Christ"; of his deadness and wanderings in public prayer, and "even in the Holy Communion having frequently no more than a cold attention"; of "not having that joy in the Holy

Ghost, no settled, lasting joy"; nor "such a peace as excludes the possibility either of fear or doubt." On October 23rd, 1738, he writes to his brother Samuel, "This witness of the Spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it." And on Jan. 4th, 1739, he uses these remarkable words—"My friends affirm that I am mad, because I said I was not a Christian a year ago. I affirm, I am not a Christian now. Indeed, what I might have been I know not, had I been faithful to the grace then given, when, expecting nothing less, I received such a sense of the forgiveness of my sins as till then I never knew. But that I am not a Christian at this day, I as assuredly know as that Jesus is the Christ." He then declares that he has neither the love of God, nor the joy of the Holy Ghost, nor the peace of God, and repeats over and over again that he is not a Christian. This, however, was the last outbreak; henceforth, during the whole of his long life, hardly the shadow of a doubt about his spiritual state crossed his path; clouds and darkness constantly swept over his outer life, but there was perpetual and unclouded sunshine within.

It has been thought well to anticipate in order to trace out Wesley's spiritual history without a break. But it is necessary to go back a little before proceeding to describe that wonderfully active career which he commenced soon after the memorable evening in Aldersgate Street. On May 1st, 1738, when he was yielding inch by inch to the arguments of his new mentor, Peter Böhler, he turned upon his old mentor, William Law, and upbraided him with not having taught him the same lesson. Law was not the man to leave such a charge unanswered. *He* too had had an interview with this wonderful German, and was evidently

not at all impressed by him; but he felt it necessary to vindicate himself to his old disciple. The correspondence between the two is most interesting, but too long to quote; and indeed there is little temptation to quote it, for it led to an estrangement, which cannot be too deeply deplored, between two of the holiest and ablest men of the day, who were both intensely in earnest about promoting one great object. It is more pleasant to dwell on the fact that in spite of this difference, John Wesley always spoke of William Law personally with the deepest respect, frequently recommended his practical works, and made them class-books for the two highest classes at Kingswood school; while Law, on his side, though he differed widely from Wesley's later views and practices, and though he certainly as a rule did not spare those from whom he differed, never once drew that terribly powerful weapon, his pen, to deal a blow at his old friend.

John Wesley was the most outspoken of men; whatever was in his mind was at once disclosed without the slightest circumlocution or disguise to all who cared to know it. As he disburdened himself to his old guide, William Law, so he made no secret whatever of his change to other old friends. Among these were the family of the Huttons, whose house in Westminster had been almost John and Charles Wesley's home in London, after Samuel Wesley, through whom they had made acquaintance with the family, had removed to Tiverton. On the Sunday evening after the Aldersgate meeting, John was present at a meeting of one of those religious societies of which more will be said presently, at Mr. Hutton's house, and during the reading of a sermon of Bishop Blackall's, he stood up and declared,

to the amazement of the company, that he had never been a Christian till within the last five days; that he was perfectly certain of this; and that the only way for them to become Christians was to believe and confess they were not so now. "Have a care, Mr. Wesley," said Mr. Hutton, "how you despise the benefits received by the two Sacraments." Hutton was, like William Law, a nonjuring clergyman of the second generation, and, like all the Nonjurors, an advanced Churchman. Mrs. Hutton was still more vehement—"If," she said, "you have not been a Christian ever since I knew you, you have been a great hypocrite, for you made us all believe that you were one." John's reply shows how strong the Moravian influence was upon him—"When we renounce everything but faith and get into Christ, then, and not till then, have we any reason to believe that we are Christians." John Wesley rarely offended against good taste, and in later days he would have been the first to revolt against such an expression as "get into Christ"; but this by the way. Mrs. Hutton wrote an account of the startling incident to Samuel Wesley, who was her first friend among the brothers. Samuel's reply was very characteristic—"What Jack means by his not being a Christian till last month, I understand not. Had he never been in covenant with God? Then, as Mr. Hutton observed, baptism was nothing. Had he totally apostatized from it? I dare say not; and yet he must either be unbaptized or an apostate to make his words true"—and so forth. There was the true Wesley ring of clearness and directness about the reply, which also appears in the sharp and abrupt, but always truly amicable, correspondence on the subject between the two brothers themselves. Samuel Wesley's was a fine

character, and John Wesley always respected it, though the divergences between the brothers widened with time.

There was yet one step which Wesley could not be satisfied without having taken. He must see for himself in their own home these people who modelled their lives after the Primitive Church. Accordingly, in the middle of June 1738, he set forth, accompanied by his old friend Ingham and another, on his pilgrimage. At Frankfort he had the pleasure of conversing with the *natural* father of him whom he now considered as his own *spiritual* father, Peter Böhler. At Marienborn he met a brotherhood of ninety persons presided over by Count Zinzendorf, who was the leader of the whole community of the United Brethren. Here he spent a fortnight, and wrote a rapturous account of what he saw to his brother Samuel, of all men in the world. "God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a Church whose conversation is in heaven; in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walks as He walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so are they all partakers of one Spirit—the Spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. I believe, in a week, Mr. Ingham and I shall set out for Herrnhuth, about three hundred and fifty miles hence. Oh, pray for us, that God would sanctify to us all these precious opportunities."

One of the most striking features in the character of this remarkable man, is the blending of an almost unique capacity for ruling with a readiness to submit to indignities with the utmost meekness. One cannot describe his treatment at Marienborn better than by saying in homely phrase that he was made to eat

humble pie. He was not admitted to the Holy Communion because "the congregation saw him to be *homo perturbatus*, and that his head had gained an ascendancy over his heart," and also because they were desirous not to interfere with his plan of effecting good as a clergyman of the English Church; and the exclusion was the more marked because his friend Ingham *was* admitted. Count Zinzendorf, who combined the pride of a spiritual autocrat with that of a feudal baron, treated Wesley in the most lordly fashion. He ordered him to dig in his garden, and Wesley humbly obeyed him; he then told him to come with him just as he was to visit a neighbouring noble; and when Wesley asked to be allowed to make himself neat, forbade him, saying, "You must be simple, my brother."

On July 19th, the pilgrims set forth again; at Weimar Wesley was brought before the Duke, who desired to know why he was going to Herrnhuth. "To see the place where the Christians live," was the reply. Having arrived at Herrnhuth, Wesley sat at the feet of a pious carpenter, Christian David, who instructed him in what were thought the most elementary truths, as also did other members of the brotherhood. Wesley received it all with the intensest humility and thankfulness, and wrote, "I would gladly have spent my life here. Oh, when shall this Christianity cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea?" He was absent from England altogether about three months, and he carefully described all the minutest details of the Christian life and teaching which had so delighted him.

But now comes the strangest part of the story. On his return he began a letter to the Moravians at Marienborn and Herrnhuth, in which, after specifying

the many points of which he approved, he proceeded—"But of some other things I stand in doubt, which I will mention in love and meekness. Is not the Count all in all among you? Do you not magnify your own Church too much? Do you not use guile and dissimulation in many cases? Are you not of a close, dark, reserved temper and behaviour?" It is true the letter was never sent, but it shows what Wesley thought all the same, and it throws light on another letter which he actually *did* send to Count Zinzendorf, in which, having spoken of "the love and zeal of the brethren in Holland and Germany, particularly at Herrnhuth," he adds—"I hope to see them at least once more, were it only to speak freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them."

We find the same curiously mixed feelings in John Wesley with regard to the Moravians in England. There was, as we shall see, a complete breach between them and the Wesleys; but another meeting with Peter Böhler seems to have revived all John Wesley's admiration for that body to which Böhler belonged. "I had," he writes (April 6th, 1741), "a long conversation with Peter Böhler. I marvel how I refrain from joining these men. I scarce ever see any of them but my heart burns within me. I long to be with them, and yet I am kept from them." Such discrepancies, instances of which may be found in other matters, may be explained, I think, by the fact that Wesley said or wrote just what was uppermost in his mind at the moment; he was frankness itself; and, as his brother Charles said many years later, could never keep a secret in his life. But the direct influence of the Moravians upon Wesley only

lasted for a few years at the most, though the indirect effect of their teaching pervaded all his after life.

Before passing on from the important question of the Moravian influence, it should be added that what Wesley learnt from Peter Böhler did not in the least shake his attachment to the Church of his baptism. Shortly after the memorable Aldersgate meeting, he published a pamphlet entitled, *The Doctrines of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works: Extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England*, to show that what he taught was in accordance with the teaching of his spiritual mother; and on June 11th, he preached a sermon at St. Mary's, Oxford, on the text: "By grace are ye saved, through faith," in which he clearly set forth his views. St. Mary's, it should be remembered, is the University pulpit; his audience would of course be a critical one; and this sermon must be regarded as a manifesto, put forth in a place where, of all others, he would, as a Fellow of a College, be most responsible for every word he uttered, and where his language would therefore be carefully chosen. We find in this sermon the germs of all his future teaching; but that teaching is too important a matter to be discussed at the close of a chapter; it requires and deserves a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER VI.

JOHN WESLEY'S TEACHING.

HAD John Wesley been asked what new doctrine he taught, he would assuredly have answered, "None whatever." Indeed he *did* say so in effect over and over again. He takes up quite eagerly a supposed objection. "'Why, these are only the common fundamental principles of Christianity!' Thou hast said; so I mean; this is the very truth, I know they are no other; and I would to God both thou and all men knew, that I, and all who follow my judgment, do vehemently refuse to be distinguished from other men by any but the common principles of Christianity."[1] And if any one had pressed him further, and desired to know how he would have those common principles interpreted, he would as assuredly have answered, "According to the Church of England." Two or three instances will suffice to show this. "I simply," he writes in 1739, "described the plain, old religion of the Church of England, which is now almost everywhere spoken against under the new name of Methodism." In 1744, "You are a member of the Church of England? Are you? Then the controversy is at an end." "'If this were done in

[1] "Character of a Methodist," *Works*, viii. 348.

defence of the Church.' That is the very proposition I undertake to prove." "'But why then do you leave the Church?' '*Leave the Church!* What can you mean?'"[1] In 1745, "But I have greater authority, and such as I reverence only less than the oracles of God; I mean that of our own Church." There was no discrepancy to his mind between these two authorities, the Bible and the Church; the one was but the exponent of the other. In a noble passage he tells us plainly what was the mainspring of all his teaching—"To candid, reasonable men, I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God; just hovering over the great gulf; till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing—the way to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for that very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. Oh give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri.* Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone; only God is here. In His presence I open, I read, His book; for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does anything appear dark or intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights, 'Lord, is it not Thy Word? "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God." Thou "givest liberally, and upbraideth not."

[1] *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.*
[2] *Farther Appeal.*

Thou hast said, "If any man be willing to do Thy will, he shall know!" I am willing to do, let me know, Thy will.' I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual.' I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak; and what I thus learn, that I teach."[1]

And by this standard of Holy Scripture as interpreted by his own branch of the Church, he was not only prepared to abide in general terms, but was quite ready to submit every one of his tenets in detail to be tried by this touch-stone. Let us notice briefly what those tenets were.

Justification by faith was the hinge on which all his teaching turned; but it must not for a moment be confounded with what is termed in theological language, Solifidianism. If he was at all inclined to this, when the Moravian influence was yet fresh, he very soon corrected himself. "I fell," he says, "among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, whose confused and undigested accounts magnified faith to such an amazing size, that it quite hid all the rest of the commandments." This would never suit the practical mind of John Wesley. Nor did this doctrine of justification by faith at all lead him to make light of the necessity of repentance. "Repentance absolutely must go before faith; fruits meet for it, if there be opportunity." Justifying faith cannot exist without previous repentance. "Whoever

[1] Preface to *Sermons*.

desires to find favour with God should cease to do evil, and learn to do well."[1] In fact no one who reads John Wesley's works candidly and intelligently can for a moment charge him with exalting faith to the disparagement of those good works which are its inseparable results. John Wesley was a true preacher of righteousness; and the most violent opposition he ever aroused was on the score of his laying too much stress upon good works. Faith and holiness, justification and sanctification, were separable in thought, but quite inseparable in fact. "The moment we are justified by the grace of God through the Redemption that is in Jesus, we are also born of the Spirit; but in order of thinking justification precedes sanctification. We first conceive His wrath to be turned away, and then His Spirit to work in our hearts. Justification implies only a relative, the new birth a real change. God in justifying us does something *for* us; in begetting us again He does the work *in* us. By justification, instead of enemies we become children; by sanctification, instead of sinners we become saints. The first restores us to the favour, the other to the image, of God. Justification, in short, is equivalent to pardon, and the very moment we are justified, sanctification begins. In that instant we are born again."[2]

This seems to me to be a fair summary of Wesley's views, but the subject requires further amplification and explanation. It must, for instance, be clearly explained that by faith Wesley meant far more than belief. It

[1] For fuller evidence on this point see Canon Hockin's *John Wesley and Modern Methodism*, pp. 107—112 (4th ed.).

[2] See *inter alia* Wesley's sermon on "Justification by Faith," Vol. I. Sermon V.

was at least as much a moral and spiritual as an intellectual act. "What," he asks, "is faith? Not an opinion nor any number of opinions, be they ever so true. A string of opinions is no more Christian faith than a string of beads is Christian holiness." Opinions are "feathers light as air, trifles not worth naming." This taken by itself is rather startling language, and so also is another passage which contains a strange gloss upon the Athanasian Creed. "The fundamental doctrine of the people called 'Methodists' is, Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the true faith; the faith which works by love; which, by means of the love of God and our neighbour, produces both inward and outward holiness. This faith is an evidence of things not seen; and he that thus believes is regenerate, or born of God; and he has the witness in himself (call it assurance, or what you please); the Spirit Itself beareth witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. This is 'The true portraiture of Methodism,' so-called. 'A religion superior to this' (the love of God and man), none can 'enjoy,' either in time or eternity."[1] If Wesley was led, as he was accused of being led, into incautious language and into a manipulation of a creed of the Church, it was not because he really disparaged orthodoxy, but because he felt so acutely the necessity of enforcing practical holiness, and that the mere holding of right opinions in the head would not suffice to affect the heart and the life. "'We are saved by faith,' that is, the moment a man receives faith, he is saved from doubt and fear; and from his sins, of whatsoever kind they were, from his vicious

[1] Letter to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post*, Nov. 17, 1760.

desires, as well as words and actions, by the love of God and of all mankind, then shed abroad in his heart. But nothing is more unreasonable than to imagine that such mighty effects can be wrought by that poor, empty, insignificant thing which the world calls faith." [1]

With the same view to practical results, he is very careful to explain that by being saved he understood far more than being rescued from future punishment. "By salvation, I mean not merely deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin; a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. Therefore holiness is not a *condition* of a present salvation from sin; it is the thing itself. Faith is the sole condition." [2]

It was in the same practical spirit—one might almost say with the same intolerance of everything that had not a practical bearing—that he insisted so frequently upon the necessity of a *New Birth* as the beginning of holiness, using language about it which, taken by itself, certainly laid him open to the charge of holding views inconsistent with the Baptismal Service of that Church of which he was an ordained priest. But when we balance one passage with another in his works, we find that the inconsistency does not really exist.

The New Birth, however, is so prominent a feature in Wesley's teaching, that a little more must be said on the subject. He places it in importance on a level with that of justification. "If any doctrines within the

[1] *Earnest Appeal*, p. 10. [2] *Farther Appeal*, p. 47.

whole compass of Christianity may be properly termed fundamental, they are doubtless these two—the doctrine of justification, and that of the new birth; the former relating to that great work which God does *for us*, in forgiving our sins; the latter to the great work which God does *in us*, in renewing our fallen nature." What he means by the New Birth is this—"It is that great change which God works in the soul when He brings it into life; when He raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the Almighty Spirit of God when it is 'created anew in Christ Jesus'; when it is 'renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness'; when the love of the world is changed into the love of God; pride into humility; passion into meekness; hatred, envy, malice, into a sincere, tender, disinterested love for all mankind. In a word, it is that change whereby the earthly, sensual, devilish mind is turned into the 'mind which was in Christ Jesus.'"[1] It would have saved some confusion if he had called this "conversion," but he was sparing in his use of the word conversion, because he says it does not often occur in the New Testament;[2] and he also seems to have preferred the term New Birth to conversion, because the former implies more necessarily the idea of pain, travail, effort; in a word, repentance, on which, again, as a practical man, he lays great stress. Thus in his first letter to Bishop Lavington, he speaks of "the sorrow and fear which usually attend the first repentance—called by St. Chrysostom, as well as a

[1] "The New Birth." Sermon XLV., Vol. ii. of *Sermons*, pp. 73 and 75.

[2] See second letter to Bishop Lavington.

thousand other writers, 'the pangs or throes of the New Birth.'"

Here one might stop, for John Wesley expressly declares—"Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three: that of repentance, of faith, and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself." The division, it will be seen, precisely corresponds with that of the Church Catechism; in the two first parts verbatim; in the last, though not verbatim, yet quite as really, for "love is the fulfilling of the law," and holiness and love to God and man were with John Wesley one and the same thing.

This suggests an answer to another question which thoughtful people will naturally ask—How is it that John Wesley does not include among his fundamentals those Sacraments which his own Church declares to be "generally necessary to salvation"? The simple answer is, He *does* include them, precisely in the same way as the Church Catechism includes them in that threefold division to which John Wesley's threefold division exactly corresponds. They belong to God's law of love, obedience, holiness. Those who desire to see this idea exhaustively and beautifully worked out, may be referred to Bishop Ken's *Exposition of the Church Catechism, or Practice of Divine Love*, the alternative title of which tells its own tale. All through his life John Wesley attached the utmost importance to the Sacraments, and the way in which he dealt with them shows how unaltered his views were from youth to old age concerning them. For both with regard to Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, he reprinted, for the edification of his followers in later days, works which belonged

to an earlier period. The *Treatise on Baptism*, which he published in 1756, was nothing else than his father's *Short Discourse on Baptism*, published in 1700, with a few verbal alterations. A single extract will suffice to show its tendency—"By Baptism we, who were 'by nature children of wrath,' are made children of God. And this regeneration, which our Church in so many places ascribes to Baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the Church, though commonly connected therewith; being 'grafted into the body of Christ's Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace.' This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord, 'Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' By water, then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again. Herein a principle of grace is infused, which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long-continued wickedness."[1]

But had not John Wesley forgotten all this when he preached to those who had been already baptized the necessity of a New Birth? Certainly not; for in his famous sermon on the New Birth, he distinctly repeats the same views—"It is certain our Church supposes, that all who are baptized in their infancy are, at the same time, born again; and it is allowed, that the whole Office for the Baptism of Infants proceeds upon this supposition. Nor is it an objection of any weight against this, that we cannot comprehend how this work can be wrought in infants. For neither can we comprehend how it is wrought in a person of riper years."

[1] On this point see further evidence in Canon Hockin's *John Wesley and Modern Methodism*, pp. 81—88.

What then does he mean by saying in the same sermon that "baptism and the new birth are not one and the same thing," and that "it is sure all of riper years who are baptized are not at the same time born again"? Clearly that, to those who are capable of it, faith must precede baptism to make it effectual. Let us remember that John Wesley's mind was permeated with the study of the Primitive Church, in which of course adult baptism was necessarily very common, but never administered without a distinct profession of faith. Let us remember also that the term regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*), though applied to the New Birth in baptism, is not confined to that use, but is applied by our Lord (S. Matt. xix. 28) to another Birth. Finally, let us remember that John Wesley's mind was eminently practical, and that when he had found a term which exactly expressed what he meant to convey, he would not shrink from using it simply because another meaning was generally attached to it. He does not ignore or evade the difficulty, but boldly faces it, and then brushes it aside as of no practical import:—"The beginning of that vast, inward change is usually termed the New Birth. Baptism is the outward sign of this inward grace, which is supposed by our Church to be given with and through that sign to all infants, and to those of riper years, if they repent and believe the Gospel. But how entirely idle are the common disputes on this head! I tell a sinner, 'You must be born again!' 'No,' say you, 'he was born again in baptism; therefore he cannot be born again.' Alas, what trifling is this! What, if he was *then* a child of God? He is *now* manifestly a child of the devil; for the works of his father he doeth. Therefore do not play upon words.

He must go through an entire change of heart. In one not yet baptized, you yourself would call that change the New Birth. In him, call it what you will; but remember meantime that if either he or you die without it, your baptism will be so far from profiting you that it will greatly increase your damnation."[1] It should be added that Wesley attached the utmost importance to adult baptism. Such entries as the following are very frequent in his Journal—"I baptized a gentlewoman at the Foundery; and the peace she immediately found was a fresh proof that the outward sign, duly received, is always accompanied by the inward grace." "I baptized Hannah C——, late a Quaker. God, as usual, bore witness to His ordinance!" It is also a significant fact that John Wesley knows no such people as Baptists; he persistently calls them Anabaptists.

In 1788, John Wesley published a sermon on *The Duty of Constant Communion*—he strongly objects to the expression "frequent communion"—with this preface: "The following discourse was written above five-and-fifty years ago, for the use of my pupils at Oxford. I have added very little, but retrenched much; as I then used more words than I do now. But, I thank God, I have not yet seen cause to alter my sentiments in any point which is therein delivered." So the old man of 1788, the founder of the United Societies, was on this most important point entirely at one with the young man of 1733, the Oxford Methodist, Sacramentarian, Curator of the Holy Club! A few sentences from this sermon will suffice to illustrate Wesley's teaching on this point.

[1] *Farther Appeal*, &c., pp. 48, 49. Precisely the same line is taken in the sermon on *The New Birth*.

Having spoken of it as "the food of our souls," which "gives strength to perform our duty, and leads us on to perfection," "let every one, therefore," he goes on, "who has either any desire to please God, or any love of his own soul, obey God, and consult the good of his own soul, by communicating every time he can; like the first Christians, with whom the Christian sacrifice was a constant part of the Lord's service. And for several centuries they received it every day; four times a week always, and every Saint's day beside. Accordingly, those that joined in the prayers of the faithful never failed to partake of the blessed Sacrament. What opinion they had of any who turned his back upon it, we may learn from that ancient canon, 'If any believer join in the prayers of the faithful, and go away without receiving the Lord's Supper, let him be excommunicated, as bringing confusion into the Church of God.'"

In 1745, John and Charles Wesley published a volume entitled *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, with a Preface concerning the *Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*, extracted from Dr. Brevint. "Few of the books," writes Dr. Jackson in his *Life of Charles Wesley*, "which they (the brothers Wesley) published, passed through so many editions; for the authors had succeeded in impressing upon the minds of their Societies the great importance of frequent communion. They administered the Lord's Supper in London every Sabbath day." For the present purpose it is sufficient to observe that no one can read either the prose or the verse of this volume without perceiving that it would be difficult to find language strong enough to express the importance which John Wesley attached to the Holy Eucharist in

the Christian scheme. Consisteutly with these high views of the Sacraments of the Gospel, he steadily refused, in spite of strong and persistent pressure, to suffer his preachers to administer either of them. In his famous sermon "On the Ministerial Office," written quite at the close of his life (May 1789), his trumpet gives no uncertain sound on this point. "I wish all of you," says he, "who are vulgarly termed Methodists, would seriously consider what has been said. And particularly you whom God hath commissioned to call sinners to repentance. It does by no means follow from hence that you are commissioned to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Ye never dreamed of this, for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach—ye did not then, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, 'seek the priesthood also.' Ye knew 'no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.' O contain yourselves within your own bounds; be content with preaching the Gospel"—and so forth. In the same sermon he declares boldly—"The Methodists are not a sect or party; they do not separate from the religious community to which they at first belonged; they are still members of the Church; such they desire to live and to die. And I believe, one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long is, to confirm them in their present purpose, not to separate from the Church."

There are other specialities in John Wesley's teaching which must be noticed, although they do not stand at all on the same level with those already mentioned.

The doctrine of *Christian Perfection*—not *sinless* perfection as Whitefield and others would persist in calling it—brought upon John Wesley more odium than any

other. It was opposed by the old-fashioned orthodox, and still more by the new Evangelical School, as savouring of Pharisaism and spiritual pride. But John Wesley himself intended nothing less. He did *not* mean that any Christian could reach perfection in the sense of being free from ignorance, or from error, or from infirmities, or from temptation; but he *did* mean that they might be made free from outward sin, from evil thoughts, from evil tempers; he *did* mean that "Christians are called to love God with all their hearts and to serve Him with all their strength, which," he says, "is precisely what I apprehend to be meant by the scriptural term, *perfection*." In this sense he declares that he had held the doctrine of Christian perfection long before what is called his conversion. "After weighing this for some years, I openly declared my sentiments before the University in the sermon on the Circumcision of the Heart. About six years after, in consequence of an advice I received from Bishop Gibson, I published my coolest and latest thoughts, in the sermon on that subject." That is, he held the doctrine as early as 1729, preached on it before the University, on Jan. 1st (the Festival of the Circumcision), 1733, and about five years later published his latest thoughts on it. Twenty years afterwards the subject came prominently to the front; and Wesley, with his keen eye for practical results, saw that it was very necessary to guard against the obvious abuses to which the name, if not the thing, is liable. In 1759, he tells his followers that they all ought to wait for entire sanctification (the same as perfection), "not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity, but in vigorous universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness,

in denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. If any man dreameth of attaining it in any other way, yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, he deceiveth his own soul." And in 1768 he administered what I have no doubt was a well-deserved rebuke to one who had misrepresented his views. "You never heard either from my conversation or preaching or writings that 'holiness consisted in a flow of joy.' I constantly told you quite the contrary; I told you it was love; the love of God and our neighbour; the image of God stamped in the heart; the life of God in the soul of man; the mind that was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ also walked. . . . This perfection cannot be a delusion unless the Bible be a delusion too; I mean 'loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves.' I pin down all its opposers to this definition of it. No evasion! no shifting the question! where is the delusion of it?"

It was very characteristic of the man that while he never professed to have reached this stage of perfection himself, he gave an implicit and often too ready credence to those who maintained that they had reached it. He attached a growing importance to it as years went on, characterizing it as "the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust," though, at the same time, he certainly modified his views as to its nature.

Another doctrine which exposed Wesley to the charge of Pharisaism was the doctrine of *assurance*. By assurance Wesley meant something very different from the final perseverance of the Calvinists. It was simply the assurance of a present pardon, and might be, and very often was, lost. The Christian "has the

witness in himself (call it assurance, or what you please); the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit that he is the child of God." This seemed to Wesley a necessary result of his view of faith. "Faith implies assurance; an assurance of the love of God to our souls, of His being now reconciled to us, and having forgiven all our sins."[1] But in his old age he vehemently retracted his earlier opinion that such assurance was absolutely necessary as a proof of salvation. "When," he writes, "fifty years ago, my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, taught the people that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel they did not stone us. The Methodists, I hope, know better now. We preach assurance, as we always did, as a common privilege of the children of God, but we do not enforce it under pain of damnation denounced on all who enjoy it not." One of the sources of the strength, and perhaps also sometimes of the weakness, of this remarkable man, was his perfect readiness to abandon, without the slightest hesitation or evasion, any doctrine or practice in which he found himself to have been mistaken.

The last tenet of John Wesley which must be noticed, is one that he derived directly from Peter Böhler, who convinced him with much difficulty, but at last quite completely, that the change of heart is an *instantaneous* process. Here, however, again Wesley by no means contended for the necessity of every one sharing his opinion—he never did that of any opinion except those which were of the very essence of Christianity. "'So

[1] *Earnest Appeal.*

is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground,' &c. The first sowing of this seed I cannot conceive to be other than instantaneous, whether I consider experience, or the Word of God, or the very nature of the thing; however, I contend not for a circumstance, but for the substance. If you can attain it another way, do; only see that you do attain it; for if you fall short you perish everlastingly."[1] "The forgiveness of sins is one of the first unseen things whereof faith is an evidence. And if you are sensible of this will you quarrel with us concerning an indifferent circumstance of it? Will you think it an important objection that we assert that this faith is usually given in a moment?"[2]

Such is a brief, but it is hoped, a correct, and as far as it goes, complete, account of the teaching which from the year 1738 to 1791 John Wesley delivered throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles. The account of his wanderings, as he went about with indefatigable energy, charged with this message, will be the subject of the next chapter.

[1] *Farther Appeal*, p. 48. [2] *Earnest Appeal*, p. 24.

CHAPTER VII.

WESLEY AS AN ITINERANT.

As it was Charles Wesley, not John, who was the originator of Methodism, so it was George Whitefield, not John Wesley, who commenced the Evangelical Revival. During Wesley's absence in Georgia, Gloucester, Bristol, and London had been stirred by a course of preaching from Whitefield such as they had never heard before. Then, on Wesley's urgent appeal, Whitefield set forth for Georgia, leaving England just at the time when his friend was returning to it. Wesley took up Whitefield's work in England, as Whitefield took up Wesley's in Georgia; and Whitefield, on his return to London within a year, found that those who had been aroused by his preaching had "grown strong men in Christ by the ministrations of his dear friends and fellow-labourers, John and Charles Wesley."

And now (1738) commenced that incessant round of itinerant labours in every part of the British Isles, which makes the last fifty years and more of John Wesley's life a subject calculated to drive a biographer to despair. It is simply impossible to follow him step by step, although there are ample materials to enable one to do so. He seems to fly about like a meteor.

Town after town and village after village are visited by him with bewildering rapidity. A cursory glance at his Journals might lead the reader to think that there was no system in his wanderings; he seems to be here, there, and everywhere. But a closer inspection shows that the "mighty maze" was "not without a plan." The course of his journeys was guided by the direction of the places in which Societies were established, and as these increased in number, so his halting-places seem to have increased. Let any reader try the experiment in the locality with which he is best acquainted. He will soon find that when he knows where John Wesley is, he also knows approximately whence he has come and whither he is going.

The mere figures which represent John Wesley's itinerant labours are enough to take one's breath away. For a man to have commenced at the mature age of thirty-six, and to have travelled during the remainder of his life 225,000 miles, and preached more than 40,000 sermons, some of them to congregations of above 20,000 people, and most of them in the open air, is a *tour de force* to which it would be hard to find a parallel. And yet these figures represent but feebly John Wesley's toils. In order to estimate the mere physical exertion we must carry our thoughts back from the days of railways and good roads to times when there were no railways, and in some places no roads worthy of the name. Then again John Wesley was not the mere preacher. He could echo, indeed, the wish of his friend, Whitefield, "Oh, that I could fly from pole to pole, preaching the everlasting Gospel!" But that was not all; he had to organize and visit his numerous Societies; he kept himself well abreast of the literature of the

day by a wide and varied course of reading; he was a most indefatigable writer and compiler; a frequent though most unwilling controversialist; a reformer of practical abuses, and an ardent philanthropist.

Surely such an active life, physical and mental, was never led before; and if we ask for the motive power of all this activity, there is but one satisfactory answer to be given. Facts will not bear out the theory that he was merely an ambitious man who undertook all this Herculean labour to make himself a name and become a great party leader. If this had been his motive, why did he persistently dwell on the fact that he was teaching "the people called Methodists" (he would never call them by any other distinctive name) nothing new? Why did he to the very last cling to the idea that his Societies should simply be an Order in the Church of England? Why did he do absolutely nothing to perpetuate his name, for such a title as Wesleyans was never thought of by him? "So far as I know myself," he said, "I care no more about Methodism than about Prester John." Why, again, if he had been merely an ambitious man, did he shrink to an almost ludicrous extent from intercourse with those who from their position would have been best able to promote his ambitious views, and devote himself to the poor, the uninfluential, the outcast?[1]

[1] Mr. Alexander Knox, who had a wonderful knack of hitting the right nail upon the head, asks also very pertinently, "Could John Wesley have been absorbed in a passion, at once as selfish and as fascinating as any which actuates corrupt statesmen, or more corrupt demagogues, and yet enjoy a 'cheerfulness' like 'perpetual sunshine,' from 'the approbation of his own mind, the certainty that he was employed in doing good to his fellow-creatures, and the full persuasion that the Spirit of God was with him in his work'?" The words in inverted commas are a

Nor again was it the mere love of excitement and novelty which led him to be always on the move. Such restlessness of mind and body is generally found in people who have no resources in themselves; but John Wesley, as a highly-educated scholar, had resources in abundance; and there are some touching passages in his Journals which show that if he had consulted his natural inclinations he would often have been thankful to be at rest. Witness the following—

"March 17, 1752. Mr. ——'s aunt could not long forbear telling me how sorry she was that I should leave all my friends to lead this vagabond life. Why, indeed, it is not pleasing to flesh and blood; and I would not do it if I did not believe there was another world."

"March 9, 1759. At the Foundery. How pleasing would it be to flesh and blood to remain at this little, quiet place, where we have at length weathered the storm! Nay, I am not to consult my own ease, but the advancing the kingdom of God."

"August 27, 1775. I went to Miss Bosanquet's [near Wigan], and prepared for the Conference. How willingly could I spend the residue of a busy life in this delightful retirement! But

'Man was not born in shades to lie!'

"Up and be doing. Labour on, till

'Death sings a requiem to the parting soul.'"

---

quotation from Southey's *Life of Wesley*. The whole of Knox's *Letter to Mrs. Hannah More*, on Mr. Southey's *Life of John Wesley* (*Remains*, iii. 457-470, from which the above is taken), and also his *Letter on the Life of John Wesley* (*Ib.* 471-480), are well worth reading. Mr. Knox seems to me to have understood Mr. Wesley better than any man, living or dead.

"September 11, 1788. I went over to Kingswood; sweet recess! Where everything is now just as I wish. But

> 'Man was not born in shades to lie!
> Let us work now: we shall rest by and by.'"

When he wrote this he was in his 86th year! *Solve senescentem*, &c., was not his maxim.

In fact, the more closely John Wesley's history is studied, the more clearly does it appear that his one object was to do good; that his sole quarrel was with sin and Satan, and his sole ambition to promote the love of God and man, to restore the Divine Image in the souls of as many as he could influence. Those who knew him best testify to this the most warmly. There is a genuine ring about their language on this point which shows how thoroughly they were convinced of it. Let us take two instances out of many. Alexander Knox was the friend of later years, who combined, perhaps, above all others wide culture with ardent piety, and his testimony is all the more valuable because he was very far from being a blind admirer of Wesley. He had once belonged to one of his Societies, but had afterwards changed his sentiments and withdrawn. But difference of views made no difference in his conviction of the singleness and purity of Wesley's aim. It has always seemed to me most unfortunate that Knox's *Remarks* should have appeared merely as an appendix to Southey's *Life*. Readers, as a rule, rebel against appendices. It is exasperating to find, when you have reached the end of a book, that you have *not* reached the end, that there are "more last words," and you decline to read them. Now those last few pages tacked on to the second

volume of Southey are, to a student of John Wesley, worth far more than all the rest of the two volumes (including Coleridge's Notes) put together. Knox knew Wesley intimately, Southey did not. Knox took the deepest interest in just those subjects which one most connects with the name of Wesley. Southey can scarcely be said to have done so; he simply took up the life, as he might have taken up any other life, in the way of business.[1] These are the terms in which Knox speaks of Wesley's motives—"The slightest suspicion of pride, ambition, selfishness, or personal gratification of whatever kind, stimulating Mr. Wesley in any instance, or mixing in any measure with the movements of his life, never once entered into my mind. That such charges were made by his opponents I could not be ignorant. But my deep impression was, and it certainly remains unimpaired, that since the days of the Apostles there has not been a human being more thoroughly exempt from all *those* frailties of human nature than John Wesley."[2] To the same effect Dr. Whitehead, Wesley's literary executor and biographer—"Having known him for twenty-five years, and having examined his private papers, I have no hesitation in declaring that I am fully convinced he used all his influence and power, to the best of his judgment, on every occasion to promote the interests of Christianity, the prosperity of the people he

[1] This is not intended as any reflection on Southey, whose *Life of Wesley* is, after all, by far the best, from a literary point of view, which we possess. But this very fact makes one regret all the more that a man of equal calibre with Southey (such as I venture to think Knox was), and of a more kindred tone of mind, did not give us the life *par excellence* of the great reformer.

[2] He repeated this still more emphatically in letters to Mrs. Hannah More published in his *Remains*.

governed, and the peace and welfare of his country, disregarding any private concern or attachment whatever, when it stood in the way of his general purpose of doing good." This is the unvarying strain of those who knew Wesley best; they were outsiders who imputed to him other motives.

Numberless instances might be given, but it is high time that we began to grapple with the almost insuperable difficulty of dealing with the details of Wesley's itinerant work. Where are we to begin, and where are we to end? One feels painfully the truth of a remark made by one of Wesley's most acute critics—"John Wesley's life was no life at all in the ordinary sense of the word, but only a mere string of preachings, &c. His Journals are like the note-books of a physician—a curious, monotonous, wonderful narrative."[1] In fact, it would simplify matters if, instead of inquiring, "What places did John Wesley visit?" we inquired, "What places of any importance in the British Isles did he *not* visit?" Let us take the account of one single week, extracted almost at hap-hazard from his Journal.

"May 1747, *Sun.* 10.—I preached at Astbury at five; and at seven proclaimed at Congleton-cross, Jesus Christ our 'wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' It rained most of the time that I was speaking; but that did not hinder abundance of people from quietly attending. Between twelve and one I preached near Macclesfield, and in the evening at Woodly-green.

"*Mon.* 11.—I preached at noon about a mile from Ashton, and in the evening at Stayley-hall. *Tuesday*

[1] *Historical Sketches of the Reign of George II.*, by Mrs. Oliphant. Vol. ii., *The Reformer*, p. 68.

12.—I rode to Bongs, and explained to a serious people the parable of the Prodigal Son. In the evening I exhorted them at Chinley, 'earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints.' *Wed.* 13.—I preached at noon in the High-peak, and in the evening at Sheffield. *Thursday* 14.—I rode to Barley Hall. As soon as I had done preaching, William Shent told me he was just come from Leeds, where he had left Mr. Perronet in a high fever. I had no time to spare; however, at three in the morning on *Friday* 15, I set out, and between seven and eight came to Leeds. By the blessing of God he recovered from that hour."

"Being willing to redeem the time, I preached at noon, and then hastened back to Barley Hall, where I preached at seven, on 'Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.' *Sat.* 16.—I spent an hour or two at Nottingham, and then rode on to Markfield. At eight I preached. The church was pretty well filled, and God gave a blessing with His Word."

And this is a sample of what went on for fifty-two years! Cold or hot, wet or dry, good roads, bad roads, or no roads at all, it was all one to John Wesley; there he was at his post, morning, noon, and night, to deliver, as best he might, the message of his Divine Master.

It is a somewhat invidious task to select out of so many a few particular places, which were connected with John Wesley's itinerant work. But the attempt must be made; and there will, at any rate, be no difficulty in knowing where to begin. For during the first three or four years of his itinerant life, he had only two chief centres, London and Bristol.

Within five weeks of his return from Germany in 1738, he and his brother Charles had created such a

sensation by their preaching in the metropolis, that they had to wait on the Bishop of London (Dr. Gibson), to answer complaints which had reached him about their doctrines. There is a painful interest about this and other interviews, which followed in rapid succession between John Wesley and the Bishops, because one feels that the future of Methodism in its relation to the Church depended very much upon them. It certainly cannot be said that he was in any instance treated unkindly; what rather seems to have been wanting was definite guidance, the natural result of that lack of a firm grasp of Church principles, which is so terribly conspicuous in the whole history of the Church in the eighteenth century. The points on which the discussion between John Wesley and Bishop Gibson turned, were the doctrines of "an absolute assurance of salvation"; of justification by faith only, which might be so stated as to lead to Antinomianism; the propriety of re-baptizing those who had only received lay-baptism, on which Wesley, quite characteristically, held stiffer views than the Bishop; the nature of the "Religious Societies," and whether the attending their meetings came within the range of the Conventicle Act or not. Now on the first two points we have only to turn from John Wesley to John Wesley, to see how useful definite guidance would have been to him. The first doctrine was the very one for the unguarded preaching of which, just at this time, he "marvelled" many years later that the people did not stone him. As to the second, we have only to turn to the famous Conference Minutes of 1770 to see that Wesley himself thought afterwards that there really was a danger of its being so stated as to lead to Antinomianism; on the third point, the Wesleys would, in

plain words, have been all the better for a gentle snub, which the Bishop might with great advantage and propriety have administered to them; and on the fourth, when Wesley asked "if his reading in a Religious Society made it a conventicle," and "if Religious Societies are conventicles," the reply was miserably inadequate: "I think not, but I determine nothing; read the acts and laws on the subject for yourselves." But surely the Bishop might have "determined" something. The Religious Societies were excellent institutions, and valuable feeders of the Church. One of their earliest and chief promoters had been one of the best men and soundest Churchmen of his day, Bishop Beveridge. If John Wesley had been assured on high authority that these Religious Societies were things not merely to be winked at, but warmly encouraged, who can tell what might have been the effect upon him as one who sincerely desired to be loyal to the Church of his baptism? The close of the interview is more satisfactory. The brothers requested that the Bishop would not in future receive an accusation against them but at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and he replied, "No, by no means; and you may have free access to me at all times." They then thanked his lordship, and departed.

By the close of 1738 John Wesley was "almost uniformly excluded from the pulpits of the Established Church," that is, we may presume, in London, for that was the chief scene of his labours. "Be pleased to observe," he says, "I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church (though not by any judicial sentence)." [1]

[1] *Farther Appeal*, p. 113.

Now let us clearly understand what this means. He was excluded from churches in which, under any circumstances, he would have had no right to officiate without the Bishop's and the incumbent's leave. And, in common fairness to the clergy, it must be remembered that they did not know him as we know him. If they had heard of him at all, it would only be as of one who had set the ordinary routine of the Church at defiance. This fact, which is far too frequently ignored, is strikingly illustrated by another remarkable interview with a Bishop which will be noticed presently. Indeed, this period might be described as the period of "interviewing" Bishops. In February 1738-9, John Wesley went with Whitefield to the Bishop of Gloucester (Dr. Benson) to solicit a subscription for Georgia; then the two brothers Wesley waited on the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Potter), who, as he had always done, "showed them great affection." He "cautioned them to give no more umbrage than necessary, to forbear exceptional phrases, and to keep to the doctrines of the Church"—very sensible advice, but rather vague. They said they expected persecution, but would abide by the Church till her articles and homilies were repealed; not a very likely contingency to arise. Then they went again to Bishop Gibson, who "denied that he had condemned them, or even heard much about them, warned them against Antinomianism, and dismissed them kindly." And then, after a short interval, occurred the most important episcopal interview of all.

But before touching upon this, we must retrace our steps. On Feb. 17, 1738-9, Whitefield began to preach in the open air to the colliers at Kingswood; day after day, all through the cold months of February and

March, he repeated the experiment, now on Hannam Mount, now at Rose Green, now on a bowling-green in the heart of Bristol itself, and on various other spots. The effects were marvellous; the congregations increased from 200 to 20,000; and as he now wished to try what he could do elsewhere, he sent for his old friend John Wesley to take his place at Bristol and Kingswood. John writes in his Journal—"March 31, 1739. Reached Bristol, and met Mr. Whitefield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday, having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a church."

However, though to the last it was a cross to him, he *did* reconcile himself to it as "a thing submitted to rather than chosen, and submitted to because preaching even thus was better than not preaching at all." And so Hannam Mount, Rose Green, and the other parts about Bristol and Kingswood which had lately rung with the voice of Whitefield now rang with the voice of Wesley; and then the friends met in London, and Wesley preached on Blackheath to twelve or fourteen thousand; "the Lord," says Whitefield, "giving him ten thousand times more success than He has given me."

But Wesley's preaching at Bristol and Kingswood produced effects which Whitefield's apparently more exciting sermons had not done. A single extract from Wesley's Journal will show of what nature these were.

"April 26, 1739, at Newgate [Bristol], I was led to pray that God would bear witness to His word. Imme-

diately one, and another, and another sunk to the earth; they dropped on every side as if thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf, and He turned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also; and He spoke peace unto her soul. In the evening one was so wounded by the sword of the Spirit, that you would have imagined she could not live for a moment. But immediately His abundant kindness was shown, and she loudly sang of His righteousness."

This is only one out of numerous similar entries in the Journal for the spring of 1739. In fact these physical phenomena, some of them in the form of the most awful convulsions, were every-day occurrences during Wesley's sojourn at Bristol.

In the midst of all this wild excitement, Wesley had an interview with the Bishop of the diocese. This Bishop was none other than the great Joseph Butler, who had already published *The Analogy,* and whose mental powers were at their zenith. Now it surely will not be contended that the author of *The Analogy* deliberately set himself against a work which he knew to be the work of God. And yet he was more hostile to Wesley than any prelate had yet been. The upshot of the conversation was this. The Bishop said—"Well, sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it freely. You have no business here; you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese; therefore I advise you to go hence." To which Wesley replied—"My Lord, my business on earth is to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here, therefore here I stay. Being ordained

a priest, by the commission I then received, I am a priest of the Church Universal; and being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England. I conceive not, therefore, that in preaching here by this commission I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, Shall I obey God or man? But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile that I could advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls in any other place more than in Bristol, in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence, which till then I may not do."

It is deeply to be regretted that any misunderstanding should have arisen between two great and good men, both of whom had done, and were doing, in their different ways, more than any two men in England to help the cause of their common Christianity. *The Analogy* was the very best of the many good works which had firmly established Christianity against the bitter attacks which had been made upon it from various quarters. The victory had been complete on the intellectual side; it now remained to give it, in the language of preachers, "a practical application." Bishop Butler had complained in the advertisement to his great work—"It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals for

its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."

This was in 1736; and now in 1739 there stood before him a man who was prepared to devote himself, body and soul, to the work of contending against the godless spirit of the age; no ignorant fanatic, but a highly cultivated gentleman and scholar, a man of intense earnestness and boundless energy, and deeply attached to the Church of which Butler was a bishop. Was he not just the man to do the work which, in the Bishop's own view, was so sorely needed? But Bishop Butler shared the almost universal feeling of his age against everything that savoured in any degree of that dreaded enemy "enthusiasm." The wild extravagances which had been perpetrated during the reign of the Saints, under the pretext of the extraordinary illumination of the Holy Spirit, were too recent to allow even a clear-headed man like Butler to weigh calmly the pretensions of one who would certainly seem to him an enthusiast. "Sir," he said to him, "the pretending to extraordinary revelation and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing." And Wesley's plea, that when he was ordained priest on the title of his Fellowship, he had a roving commission given to him to preach just where he liked, and set bishops, incumbents, and all parochial order at defiance, could hardly commend itself to an orderly mind like that of Bishop Butler. Wesley, on his side, clearly did not appreciate the sort of man with whom he was dealing. We may be quite sure that in later years, when his own judgment had become more matured, and when he had read and admired "that fine book, Bishop Butler's *Analogy*," he would have addressed its great writer with more respectful consideration.

But he was now in the ardour of his first love, and would allow nothing to interfere with what he regarded as his great work. So the Bishop went on his way, and Wesley went on his.

But surely it is not unreasonable to suppose that many clergy felt as Bishop Butler felt, and that the true ground of their disapproval of Wesley's proceedings was not that they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. Take the case of Wesley's own brother. By the confession of all, Samuel Wesley was a good man according to his lights,[1] and yet he could hardly find language strong enough to express his disapproval of the "new departure" of John and Charles. With that blunt outspokenness which was a characteristic of all the Wesley family, he thus ungraciously acknowledges the receipt (whether as a gift or not, we do not know) of one of his brother's publications[2]—"April 16, 1739. I have got your abridgment of Halyburton; and, if it please God to allow me life and strength, I shall demonstrate that the Scot as little deserves preference to all Christians, as the book to all writings but those you mention. There are two flagrant falsehoods in the very first chapter. But your eyes are so fixed upon one point that you overlook everything else. You overshoot, but Whitefield raves." Some months later (September 3) he cross-questions him about the physical phenomena:

[1] Mr. Telford, with his usual fairness, owns that "whatever were Samuel Wesley's prejudices against the new movement, he was a devoted Christian."—*Life of Charles Wesley*, p. 77.

[2] *An Abstract of the Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Halyburton.* With recommendatory Epistle by George Whitefield, and Preface by John Wesley. Oswald: London, 1739.

"Did these agitations ever begin during the use of any collects of the Church? or during the preaching of any sermon that had before been preached within consecrated walls without effect? or during the inculcating any other doctrine besides that of your new birth?" And, what must have cost one who had always been the most affectionate of sons the greatest effort, he felt it a duty to unsettle his aged mother by warning her in the strongest terms against countenancing what he thought the delusions of her younger sons. "It was with exceeding concern and grief I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion, so far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too? I earnestly beseech the Almighty to preserve you from joining a schism at the close of your life, as you were unfortunately engaged in one at the beginning of it. It will cost you many a protest, should you retain your integrity, as I hope to God you will. They boast of you already as a disciple. They design separation. They are already forbidden all the pulpits in London; and to preach in that diocese is actual schism. In all likelihood, it will come to the same all over England, if the Bishops have courage." Then he specifies the points, which include most of the distinctive features of John Wesley's system, with the strongest disapproval, and declares, "As I told Jack, I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him (discipline is at too low an ebb), but that he should excommunicate the Church. It is pretty near it." He evidently thinks it is a pity that more stringent measures could not be taken against his brothers, but "ecclesiastical censures have lost their terrors—thank fanaticism on the one

hand, and atheism on the other. To talk of persecution from thence is mere insult." Within three weeks of writing these very plain words the writer had passed away. Now if a good man who loved John Wesley dearly, and must have known his real goodness, could be so strongly opposed to his irregular proceedings, is it not more than probable that many other good men, who knew and cared nothing about him personally, opposed him simply because they thought he was wrong, and not because they were hostile to spiritual religion?

And now to return, from this long but very necessary digression, to John Wesley's outer life. From 1738 to 1742 the scenes of his work were chiefly Bristol and London, and the places which lay between them. But in 1742 he was drawn northwards. John Nelson, a pious stonemason, persuaded him to come and give him a helping hand in Yorkshire, and Lady Huntingdon induced him to try and arouse the colliers on the Tyne, as he had aroused the colliers on the Avon. Hence Newcastle became a third great centre, and there were few places which he loved more, and where his labours were more highly appreciated. His preaching among the colliers of Newcastle was as successful, if not more so, than among the colliers of Bristol and Kingswood. Seventeen hundred and forty-two was an eventful year in Wesley's itinerant work; in that year he began to plant the seed in many different counties; in that year he visited Epworth after seven years' absence. As his invariable custom was, he offered his services in the old church where he had so often ministered and worshipped. Of course the curate-in-charge, Mr. Romley, was quite within his rights when he rejected them, but it was an instance of "summum jus, summa

injuria." He owed his own position in life entirely to the Wesley family; he might at least have remembered that John was the son of his late benefactor; and, however much he might have disagreed with John Wesley's views, it was neither a graceful nor a grateful act to preach a sermon obviously directed against them. But he could not possibly have pursued a policy better calculated to defeat his own ends. John Wesley, not being allowed to preach in the church, took up his position on his father's tomb, and every evening for a week preached to congregations such as had never been seen before at Epworth. No wonder that there were "few places where his preaching was attended with greater or more permanent effect than at Epworth on this his first visit."[1] No wonder that Wesley himself was more than content with the result. So dramatic an incident of course took hold of the popular mind; and among the many pictures of John Wesley, none is more effective than that which represents him delivering from this coign of vantage the message which he was not permitted to deliver within the venerable walls hard by. Nothing has tended more to encourage the popular idea that Wesley was "turned out of the Church." If he might not preach in the church of which his father had been rector, and himself curate, where might he preach? The argument is not logical; for exclusion from a building and exclusion from a society are different things. But simple people do not discriminate; and the Church owes a deep grudge to Mr. Romley, who half a year later completed the disastrous work which he had begun by repelling

[1] *Southey*, i. 382.

Wesley from the Holy Communion. The story must be told in Wesley's own words. "Jan. 2, 1743.—At Epworth. Many from the neighbouring towns asked if it would not be well, as it was Sacrament Sunday, for them to receive it. I told them, 'By all means; but it would be more respectful first to ask Mr. Romley, the curate's leave.' One did so in the name of the rest, to whom he said, 'Pray tell Mr. Wesley I shall not give him the Sacrament, for he is not fit.' How wise a God is our God! There could not have been so fit a place under heaven where this should befall me first as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place where, 'according to the straitest sect of our religion,' I had so long 'lived a Pharisee.' It was also fit in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table where I had myself so often distributed the Bread of Life, should be one who owed all in this world to the tender love which my father had shown to his, as well as personally to himself." For the credit of Epworth Church I hasten to add some further extracts, which show that at a later period her most distinguished son was better received by his spiritual mother.

"July 3, 1748.—Epworth. Mr. Hay, the rector, reading prayers, I had once more the comfort of receiving the Lord's Supper at Epworth. I was peculiarly pleased with the deep seriousness of the congregation at church, both morning and evening; and all the way as we walked down the Church Lane, after the sermon was ended, I never saw one person look on either side, or speak one word to another."

"March 12, 1758.—Epworth. I was much comforted at church, both morning and afternoon, by the serious

behaviour of the whole congregation, so different from what it was formerly."

From the commencement of Wesley's itinerant work, mob violence was one of the forms of opposition which he had to encounter. It broke out both in London and Bristol, when those places were the only great centres; but though the magistrates would not interfere at first, they very soon checked it with a firm hand; and the admirable courage and coolness of Wesley himself helped them to stamp out the nuisance. But as soon as the work began to spread, the violence broke out again with redoubled force. It reached a climax among the wild colliers of Staffordshire in the summer of 1743. Wednesbury was one of the chief scenes of these disgraceful riots. In the January John Wesley had visited the place with considerable success, the vicar, Mr. Egginton, encouraging his work. But in the spring Wesley found, he says, "things surprisingly altered. The inexcusable folly of Mr. W—s [one of his preachers who had railed against the Church] had so provoked Mr. E—n, that his former love had turned into bitter hatred; but he had not yet had time to work up the poor people into the rage and madness which afterwards appeared." In June Wesley received "a full account of the terrible riots in Staffordshire," and with his usual courage set out at once for the scene of danger. But it was not till the close of October that the storm burst out in all its fury. Then the mob besieged the house in which he was staying, and cried, "Bring out the minister; we will have the minister." "I desired one to take their captain by the hand and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us, the lion was become a lamb. I desired

him to go out and bring one or two more of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two who were ready to swallow the ground with rage, but in two minutes they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them, I called for a chair, and standing up, asked, 'What do any of you want with me?' Some said, 'We want you to go with us to the Justice.' I replied, 'That I will, with all my heart.' I then spoke a few words which God applied; so that they cried out with might and main, 'The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defence.'" But unfortunately the matter did not end here. The Justice was timid, and would not interfere. So Wesley was hurried on to another magistrate at Walsal, who was equally timid. It was now dark, and as they were returning to Wednesbury they were met by a Walsal mob; Wesley's convoy deserted him, and he was left alone in the midst of an infuriated rabble. They seized him by the collar and strove to pull him down; one struck him on the breast, another on the mouth with such force that the blood gushed out; another lifted up his arm to strike, but then let it drop, and stroked his head, saying, "What soft hair he has!" He was dragged back to Walsal and paraded through the main street. "Are you willing," he cried, "to hear me speak?" They replied, "No, no; knock out his brains; down with him; kill him at once!" "What evil," asked Wesley, "have I done? Which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?" "Bring him away! bring him away!" was the reply. And then he began to pray; and one of the ringleaders turned aud said, "Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me, and no

one shall hurt a hair of your head." Two or three others joined, one of them, luckily, a prize-fighter, and so he was rescued; and "a little before ten o'clock," he writes, "God brought me safe to Wednesbury, having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands. From the beginning to the end I found the same presence of mind as if I had been sitting in my own study. But I took no thought for one moment before another; only once it came into my mind, that if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat and a light pair of boots."

Similar scenes had taken, or were about to take place at various other places. At Pensford, he tells us (March 19, 1742), "The rabble brought a bull they had been baiting, and strove to drive it among the people. But the bull was wiser than his drivers; it ran on either side of us, while we quietly sang praise to God, and prayed for about an hour. They drove the bull against the table. I put aside his head with my hand, that the blood might not drop upon my clothes, intending to go as soon as the hurry was over." At Whitechapel (Sept. 12, 1742) 'they drove cows among the congregation, and threw stones, one of which struck me between the eyes; but I felt no pain at all; and when I had wiped away the blood, went on testifying that God hath not given us the spirit of fear." At St. Ives, in Cornwall, (Sept. 16, 1743), "Satan began to fight for his kingdom. . . . I would fain have persuaded our people to stand still, but the zeal of some and fear of others had no ears. So that, finding the uproar increase, I went into the midst, and brought the head of the mob up

with me to the desk. I received but one blow on the side of the head; after which we reasoned the case till he grew milder and milder, and at length undertook to quiet his companions." At Buckland (Sept. 10, 1753) "the curate had provided a mob with horns, and other things convenient, to prevent the congregations hearing me." He always made a point of facing a mob. At Falmouth in 1745, when the panic about a Stuart invasion was at its height, and Wesley was absurdly suspected of being a Papist and a Jacobite, the rabble broke into the house where he was staying; but Wesley went boldly out into their midst, and asked one after another, "To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? or you? or you?" and speedily silenced them.

And so we might go on citing instances of savage opposition, met with a courage which was only exceeded by the calmness and good judgment which always characterized Wesley in such emergencies. This form of opposition was chiefly confined to the earlier period of his itinerant work. There was a recrudescence of it here and there in later days, but it became more and more the exception, not the rule, and Wesley's own Christian conduct was the chief cause of its disappearance. There must be two parties to a quarrel, and he steadily refused to be one of them. No provocation could induce him to be disloyal to the "powers that be," which he believed from his very soul to be "ordained of God"; and the opposition which he met with from his brother clergy filled him with sorrow rather than anger. He issued a most touching appeal to them in 1745. "Desire of us," he said, "anything we can do with a safe conscience, and we will do it immediately. . . . We do not desire any preferment from Church or State. But

we do desire (1) that if anything be laid to our charge, we may be permitted to answer for ourselves; (2) that you would hinder your dependents from stirring up the rabble against us, who are certainly not proper judges of such matters; (3) that you suppress and thoroughly discountenance all riots;—these things you can certainly do with a safe conscience."

It is impossible to follow Wesley step by step in his wanderings; but it may be said generally that the places in which his influence was most felt, and which he seems to have taken the greatest pleasure in visiting, were the large commercial centres and the country villages. London, Bristol, and Leeds were marked out from all other places in the "Deed of Declaration" of 1784, as the three places in which the annual Conference was to be held in turns; Newcastle, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Halifax, Huddersfield, Macclesfield, and towns of that stamp were also great strongholds of Wesley. Mining districts, and especially collieries, also furnished rich veins of spiritual ore for John Wesley; hence much of his time was spent in Cornwall, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and the northern coal-fields. Purely agricultural places, again, were visited by him with great effect and pleasure, and hence, perhaps, the great hold he always had upon his own native county of Lincoln.

On the other hand, places of fashionable resort, such as Bath and Cheltenham, and cathedral cities, were not, as a rule, congenial fields of labour; and neither of the University towns was much affected by him. He used in his earlier itinerant career always to take his preaching turn in the University pulpit at Oxford,[1] and his

[1] As there were then far fewer Masters of Arts than there are

preaching produced a flutter in that learned dove-cot; but it cannot be said that either the University or the city was widely influenced. Cambridge he all but ignored.

The reason of this choice of places is obvious. John Wesley, though—or shall we say because?—he was a refined gentleman and a highly cultivated scholar, always found himself more at home among the poor or among plain men of business than among those whom he calls "the genteel vulgar." Not that he did not appreciate culture. He enjoyed chance interviews with men like Dr. Johnson and Bishop Lowth. But with John Wesley it was not a question as to what he would enjoy, but as to where he would do most good; and he was thoroughly convinced that that was not among the classes who were induced by Lady Huntingdon to attend Whitefield's ministry. He had a mean opinion both of their moral and intellectual qualities. With a grim sort of humour he expresses his surprise when he finds that they know how to behave themselves. "Cockermouth, April 26, 1761.—Even the genteel hearers were decent; many of the rest seemed deeply affected." "Oct. 28, 1765.—Preached at Bath; but I had only the poor to hear; there being service at the same time in Lady Huntingdon's Chapel. So I was just in my element. I have scarce found such liberty at Bath before." "April 25, 1771, Wexford.—I preached in the market-place at ten. The congregation was very large and very genteel; and yet as remarkably well-behaved as any I have seen in the kingdom." "Aug. 25, 1771, Pembroke.—Many of them were gay, genteel people; so I spake on the first elements of the Gospel. But I was still out of

now, the turn came much more frequently—perhaps about once every three years.

their depth. Oh, how hard it is to be shallow enough for a polite audience!" Holding such sentiments, it was no wonder that he shrank from fashionable congregations.

Two country villages claim special notice, because the incumbents were not only friends and supporters of John Wesley, but itinerants themselves. These are Haworth, a village in the heart of the wild hills and moors of the West Riding, and Everton, amid the tamer scenery of the Midlands. The incumbent of the one was William Grimshaw, of the other, John Berridge. Both were eccentric almost to the verge of insanity; both grate upon one terribly by their incessant exhibitions of bad taste—a fault of which John Wesley never was guilty; but both were thoroughly good, self-denying, hard-working men; and both paved the way for Wesley not only in their own parishes, but in the wide circles through which they itinerated. Hence his visits to Haworth and Everton were always triumphant successes. He mentions, as he always does when he can, with especial satisfaction, the vast number of communicants he found at Haworth Church; and at Everton he was partly pleased, partly embarrassed by the fact, that his preaching was so effective that it revived, in an aggravated form, those physical convulsions which in the early period of his itinerant work had appeared at Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle.

"Aug. 28, 1759.—I preached at Mr. Berridge's church. One sunk down, and another, and another; some cried aloud in an agony of prayer. One young man and one young woman were brought into Mr. Berridge's house, and continued there in violent agonies both of body and soul." With much more to the same effect.

All this will appear to many minds very shocking,

but easily to be accounted for. The heat of the crowded church, the electric spark of sympathy running through the excited masses, the wild terror and the ecstatic joy arising from the treatment of the most awful subjects with the most vivid realism, will appear quite enough to throw sensitive minds off their balance, and then to react upon their bodily frames. But such explanations would never satisfy one who had so intense a belief in the supernatural as John Wesley had. He had no doubt whatever that the phenomena were solely attributable to an agency outside the natural world; but he *was* in doubt in particular cases as to whether that agency was from below or from above; and he characteristically concludes that both had a share in it; sometimes it was God's work, sometimes Satan mimicked the work of God. Few things more tended to prejudice his contemporaries against John Wesley than these results of his preaching; and perhaps he *was* sometimes deceived in the matter. His very virtues prevented him from being the best man to detect imposture or to check extravagance. His intense belief in the intervention of Divine Providence in human affairs, and his guileless readiness to believe the best of every one, may have led him to regard with too favourable an eye manifestations which should have been sternly repressed. But when he *was* convinced—as he not unfrequently was—of their unreality, no one could have been more prompt or more effective in putting a stop to them.

Wesley's itinerant labours were not confined to his own country. He frequently crossed over the border into Scotland, and the Channel into Ireland, and did not neglect the isles dotted about our coasts. His first visit to Ireland took place in 1747, and he afterwards

crossed the Irish Channel no less than forty-two times. Considering the strong hold which Roman Catholicism had upon that class of people who were most likely to be attracted by Wesley, it is wonderful that he should have had so great a measure of success in Ireland. At Dublin there was a larger body of his followers than at any other place except London; some of his most efficient helpers came from Ireland; and, as a rule, he was well received wherever he went. He loved the Irish, though he was not blind to their faults; he applied to them the description of Reuben, "unstable as water," and told them, with his usual plainness, of the danger of such instability. But their warm-heartedness, their generosity, and perhaps, we may add, their excitability, were qualities which he greatly admired, and which rendered them peculiarly susceptible to the influence of his preaching. But their impulsiveness and impetuosity also made them a very inflammable material; and we are not surprised at finding riots breaking out in Ireland after they had all but died away in England. Wesley's farewell to Ireland, when he was long past eighty years of age, was quite an ovation.

It is a curious instance of the predominance of temperament over training that Wesley was more successful in Ireland than he was in Scotland. According to the principles of the majority of the Irish, Wesley was a pestilent heretic; according to those of the Scotch, a true evangelist. But in Ireland feeling ruled over intellect; in Scotland intellect ruled over feeling. Of all things, John Wesley disliked controversy; and if the Scotch were not controversial, they were nothing. They wanted to argue with him; and John Wesley preferred being pelted with mud and rotten eggs to

being pelted with arguments. We hear of no riots in Scotland; in fact he was, as a rule, received most kindly and respectfully there; but he could make little way. It is fair to remember that the Scotch were a decent, orderly people, better educated than either the English or the Irish, and quite familiar with theological questions. Hence, the message which John Wesley had to deliver was not so new to them, nor the threats he had to denounce so formidable, as to their neighbours. Moreover they were Calvinists, almost to a man, and would listen, therefore, with some prejudice to one who was known to be a strong anti-Calvinist. And once more, John Wesley was a Church of England man to the backbone, and so the discipline, doctrine, and mode of worship of the Presbyterians were distasteful to him. It is no wonder, therefore, to find such entries as these in his Journal—"At Glasgow I preached on the Old Green to a people, the greatest part of whom *hear* much, *know* everything, and *feel* nothing." "The dead, unfeeling multitudes in Scotland." "At Dundee I admire the people; so decent, so serious, so perfectly unconcerned." "There is seldom fear of wanting a congregation in Scotland; but the misfortune is, they know everything, so they learn nothing." "Being informed that the Lord's Supper was to be administered in the West Kirk (Edinburgh), I knew not what to do; but at length I judged it best to embrace the opportunity, though I did not admire the manner of administration. How much more simple, as well as more solemn, is the service of the Church of England!" "Oh, what a difference is there between the English and Scotch method of burial! The English does honour to human nature; and even to the poor remains, that

were once the temple of the Holy Ghost! But when I see in Scotland a coffin put into the earth, and covered up without a word, it reminds me of what was spoken of Jehoiakim, 'He shall be buried with the burial of an ass!'"

What John Wesley *did* like in Scotland was just what one would have expected him to like—the services in the Episcopal chapels. If there was any body of Christians which he would have preferred to the Church of England, it would have been the Scotch Episcopalians. With their doctrines and their ritual he would be thoroughly in sympathy. He contrasts the Church with the Kirk, much to the disadvantage of the latter. "May 19, 1776.—Aberdeen. I attended the morning service at the kirk, full as formal as any in England; and no way calculated either to awaken sinners, or to stir up the gift of God in believers. In the afternoon I heard a useful sermon in the English chapel; and was again delighted with the exquisite decency both of the minister and the whole congregation. The Methodist congregations come the nearest to this; but even these do not come up to it." "Glasgow, 1779.—I attended the Church of England service in the morning, and that of the kirk in the afternoon. Truly, 'no man, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new.' How dull and dry did the latter appear to me, who had been accustomed to the former!"

On his way to and from Ireland, John Wesley generally made a round of visits in Wales; and though the great body of the Welsh Methodists followed the lead of Whitefield and became Calvinists, yet Wesley had considerable success in the Principality. The way

had been prepared for him by Howell Harris, who had been an itinerant evangelist some time before the Wesleys and Whitefield. There is one entry in his Journals iu Wales which so aptly illustrates what he desired to do that it may be quoted. "March 27, 1748. Holyhead.—Mr. Swindells informed me that Mr. E. (the clergyman of the parish) would take it a favour if I would write some little thing, to advise the Methodists not to leave the church, and not to rail at their ministers. I sat down immediately and wrote, *A Word to a Methodist*, which Mr. E. translated into Welsh and printed."

When quite an old man (1777) he visited the Isle of Man, "and," he writes, "a more loving, simple-hearted people than this I never saw—and no wonder; for they had but six Papists and no Dissenters in the island." Four years later (1781) he was still more delighted when he "visited the island round, east, south, north, and west." "I was thoroughly convinced," he writes, "that we have no such circuit as this, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland. It is shut up from the world; and, having little trade, is visited by scarce any strangers. Here are no Papists, no Dissenters of any kind"—[to the end of his life John Wesley disliked Dissenters],—"no Calvinists, no disputers." And, what would be a great recommendation to him, "the natives are unpolished, that is, unpolluted; few of them are rich and genteel."

Finally, the hardy old man, now aged eighty-four, visited in the stormiest weather the Channel Islands, and found to his delight that "high and low, rich and poor, received the Word gladly." One can hardly place his two journeys to Holland after he was eighty years

of age, under the head of itinerant work, for they really were holiday excursions. They may, however, be mentioned as an additional proof of the marvellous activity of the old man.

Travelling is now made so easy that it is difficult to realize the hardships and even dangers which frequently beset a constant traveller like Wesley in the eighteenth century. Sea voyages were made, not in comfortable steam-packets, but in small sailing vessels which were dependent on the winds, buffeted by the tides, and took six times as long to reach their destination as their fleeter successors do. By land, we "should have seen the roads before they were made" to appreciate what Wesley went through. Till his friends persuaded him, as he grew old, to charter a chaise, he always made his journeys on horseback; he rode through storms of all kinds; and had scant sympathy with those who were deterred by such obstacles. "The wind was high and sharp, and blew away a few delicate ones," he contemptuously remarks on one occasion. No difficulty of transit prevented him from keeping an engagement, as the following account, to the truthfulness of which an Isle of Axholme man can testify, will show:—"Oct. 22, 1743. Set out from Epworth to Grimsby; but at Ferry we were at a full stop, the boatmen telling us we could not pass the Trent. It was as much as our lives were worth to put from shore before the storm abated. We waited an hour; but, being afraid it would do much hurt if I should disappoint the congregation at Grimsby, I asked the men if they did not think it possible to get to the other shore. They said they could not tell; but if we would venture our lives, they would venture theirs." They did, and crossed with great danger. Old

age made no difference to his hardiness and intrepidity. When he was more than seventy years old (1774) his horses ran away with him, and were only stopped by a gentleman galloping in between them as they were on the edge of a precipice; but Wesley felt, he says, "no more fear or care (blessed be God!) than if I had been sitting in my study." "I am persuaded," he adds, "both evil and good angels had a large share in this transaction." When he was nearly eighty (Aug. 14, 1782), as he was going to Bristol, "We were informed," he says, "that the highwaymen were on the road before us, and had robbed all the coaches that had passed, some within an hour or two. I felt no uneasiness on this account, knowing that God would take care of us; and He did so, for before we came to the spot, all the highwaymen were taken, so we went on unmolested, and came safe to Bristol."

CHAPTER VIII.

WESLEY AS AN ORGANIZER.

JOHN WESLEY'S great success as an organizer was due at least as much to his readiness to accept, and his adroitness in adapting, the suggestions of others, as to the fertility of his own resources. It is a remarkable fact that there was scarcely a single detail of his wonderfully complete system of which he can properly be called the originator. The very name and idea of "the Societies" did not in any way originate with him. Both name and thing had been thoroughly familiar to him from his childhood. "The Religious Societies" were conspicuous features in the Church life of that period to which John Wesley's father belonged; the Rector of Epworth was a personal friend of one of their most ardent supporters, Robert Nelson,[1] and vindicated the Societies in a sermon preached in 1698, the fire and vigour of which reminds us of John Wesley himself; he also appended to his *Pious Communicant rightly prepared* a forcible "Letter concerning Religious Societies."

[1] In a list of subscribers to a Free School founded at Epworth in the time of Mr. Wesley, I find the name of "Mr. Robert Nelson, £5." I have no doubt also that the lines on the portrait of Robert Nelson, signed "S. W.," were written by Samuel Wesley.

John Wesley frequently speaks in his early Journals of going "to the meeting of a Society," assuming apparently that every one would understand what he meant, for he gives no explanation.

The United Societies with which this chapter is concerned were merely a continuation of what he had organized before, for he himself tells us plainly—"The first rise of Methodism was in November 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford; the second was at Savannah in April 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house; the last was at London, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer." [1]

There is no excuse for not knowing all about these Societies; for Wesley himself, with his usual frankness, told all the world, not once, but over and over again, the whole story of them. And first we learn from him that there was "no previous design or plan at all; but everything arose just as the occasion offered." "My brother and I"—it is always "my brother and I"—"were desired to preach in many parts of London." The result of the preaching was to stir up in many a concern for their souls. They met with little sympathy, and much opposition, and naturally came those who had aroused them for advice. "Strengthen you one another," was the advice given. . . . "Talk together as often as you can. And pray earnestly with and for one another, that you may 'endure to the end and be saved.'" They said, "But we want you likewise to talk with us often, to direct and quicken us in our way, to give us

[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 175.

the advice which you well know we need, and to pray with us, as well as for us." "I asked, 'Which of you desire this? Let me know your names and places of abode.' They did so. But I soon found they were too many for me to talk with severally so often as they wanted it. So I told them, 'If you will all of you come together every Thursday, in the evening, I will gladly spend some time with you in prayer, and give you the best advice I can.' Thus arose, without any previous design on either side, what was afterwards called a *Society;* a very innocent name, and very common in London, for any number of people associating themselves together."

This, as appears from the first sentence in the General Rules of the United Societies, refers to what took place in the latter end of 1739; but Wesley's Journal speaks of a Society before this.

"May 1, 1738.—This evening our little Society began, which afterwards met in Fetter Lane." He was now under the direction of Peter Böhler, the Moravian; and the Fetter Lane Society afterwards became a Moravian Society; but it was certainly not so while Wesley belonged to it, nor yet after he had left it, until Molther arrived in England. We have John Wesley's own word for this.[1]

As we saw in the last chapter, Wesley was at this period much at Bristol, and there too a Society was founded which, among other things, "passed a resolution that all the members should obey the Church to which they belonged by fasting on Fridays," a rule about which Wesley, as a strong Churchman, was always very particular in all his Societies. Quite at the close of

[1] See his "Letter to Mr. Church," *Works*, viii. 424.

1739, Wesley returned to London, and found the Fetter Lane Society "in the utmost confusion." The squabbles which ensued need not here be recorded; Wesley showed, as he always did on such occasions, not only great self-command, but also the courtesy of the gentleman combined with the meekness of the Christian; but the result was a split with the Fetter Lane Society, and the formation of another, whose head-quarters was the Foundry. This Foundry was a dilapidated building or shed in Windmill Street, near Finsbury Square, which had been formerly used for the casting of cannon. Wesley obtained a long lease of it, and had erected there "a preaching house"—that is his own deliberately chosen word—a band-room where the classes met, the north end being also used for a school-room and a book-room for the sale of Wesley's publications; while over the band-room were John Wesley's own modest apartments,—his only home on earth for many years. Bristol, in this as in other respects, was in advance of London, the first "preaching house" having been erected in that city, near the Horse Fair, earlier in 1739. On July 23, 1740, John Wesley records—"Our little company met at the Foundry instead of Fetter Lane," and from that time forward the movement spread rapidly: London, Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle-upon-Tyne were the earliest homes of the United Societies, and then they were founded in all parts of the kingdom; and in 1743 it was found necessary to draw up a set of "general rules." This was done at Newcastle with characteristic brevity. The rules fill little more than two octavo pages, and were signed "John Wesley, Charles Wesley." In this interesting little document we have the founders' own definition of what they meant by such a Society—

"A company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

It is abundantly evident that John Wesley's intention in founding his Societies was not to weaken and paralyze, but to strengthen and vivify, the Church of his baptism, and that the very last thing he desired was any separation from that Church. "Wesley's object," writes one who will not be suspected of taking too Church-like a view, "was to revive the spirit of religion in the Church of England. To this he thought himself called; for this he commenced and continued his labours."[1] And he believed that the organization of Societies would be an effectual means of doing so; and surely he had reason for thinking this. Fifty years before, the Church of England had been wonderfully revived by "the Religious Societies." More than a century earlier the Church of Rome had been greatly strengthened by the establishment of "The Society of Jesus," the life of the great founder of which John Wesley had read with deep interest.[2] But, in point of fact, John Wesley went back much further than the seventeenth or the sixteenth century, even to the fountain-head, to the constitution of the Early Church before its division into East and West. This he endeavoured to make his model in all his arrangements; and almost all his so-called "innovations" found a precedent in the constitution of the Early Church. He dearly loved the Church of

[1] *Observations of Southey's Life of Wesley*, by Richard Watson, p. 125.

[2] See his *Journal*, vol. i. p. 369.

England, and when he varied from her at all in practice—(in doctrine he never knowingly varied from her)—it was because he thought he was justified in so doing by the customs of primitive times.[1]

Turning to details, we find at almost every stage of our inquiry illustrations of both points. We find it in the first constitution of the Societies in their most rudimentary form. They arose, as we have seen, simply from the desire of the new converts to be united more closely together; but "upon reflection," writes John, "I could not but observe, This is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. In the earlier times, those whom God had sent forth 'preached the gospel to every creature.' And the οἱ ἀκροάται, 'the body of hearers,' were mostly either Jews or heathens. But as soon as any of them were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin and seek the gospel salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these κατηχουμένοι, 'catechumens' (as they were then called), apart from the great congregation; that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities."[2]

[1] This point is well brought out by Mr. Denny Urlin, in his *John Wesley's Place in Church History*, and in his later volume, *The Churchman's Life of Wesley*.

[2] "*A Plain Account of the People called Methodists*, in a Letter to the Reverend Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham in Kent, written in the year 1784," *Works*, viii. 250. To prevent needless references, it may be said, once for all, that the quotations from Wesley in this chapter are taken from this letter, which only consists of twenty pages, unless otherwise specified. It is the clearest of the many accounts which Wesley gives of his Societies.

Following Wesley's own order, we next come to the *Class Meetings*. These also arose from apparently accidental circumstances. Wesley found there was a need of further discipline, which he knew not how to supply. "Several grew cold, and gave way to the sin which had long easily beset them." But how was he to get rid of such unsatisfactory members, or bring them to a better mind, scattered as they were in all parts of the town, "from Wapping to Westminster"?

"At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have had cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one [1] stood up and said, 'Let every member of the Society give a penny a week till all are paid.' Another answered, But many of these are poor, and cannot afford to do it.' 'Then,' said he, 'put eleven of the poorest with me; and if they can give anything, well—I will call on them weekly; and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.' It was done. In a while, some of these informed me, they found such and such a one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately—'This is the thing; the very thing we have wanted so long.' I called together all the Leaders of the classes (so we used to term them and their companies), and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected.

[1] This was a certain Captain Fry.

Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence." The plan, commenced at Bristol, soon spread elsewhere. It was found impracticable, for various reasons, for the class leader to visit each person at his own home; and it was agreed that those of each class should all meet together under the guidance of their leader; and "it can scarce be conceived," writes Wesley, "what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation."

The next institution is the *Watch-night*. This, again, was not Wesley's own idea; he "was informed that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the school; and, when they could spare the time, spent the greater part of the night in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving." "Some," he says, "advised me to put an end to this; but, upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, I designed to watch with them on the Friday nearest the full moon, that we might have light thither and back again." And so the Watch-night, closely corresponding with the "Vigiliæ" of the Early Church, became a settled institution, being held at first monthly, and then annually on New Year's Eve.

Then arose the *Quarterly Meeting* in the most natural manner possible; and its distinctive feature again bore analogy to the custom of the Early Church. "As the Society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to this, I determined at least once in three months to talk with every member myself. . . . To each of those of whose

seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose; every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given, as if I had wrote at length, 'I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God, and works righteousness.'" And then he compares these tickets to "the *σύμβολα*, or *tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them, being of just the same force as the *ἐπιστόλαι συστατικαὶ*, *commendatory letters*, mentioned by the apostle. These supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation (for so often the tickets are changed), and hereby it is immediately known that he is no longer of the community."

The next institution was the *Band Meeting;* and again we find the impulse coming to Wesley from without. Even his best converts found that the "war was not over, as they had supposed; but they had still to wrestle both with flesh and blood, and with principalities and powers; so that temptations were on every side; and often temptations of such a kind as they knew not how to speak of in a class; in which persons of every sort, young and old, men and women, met together." They wanted some means of closer union; and in compliance with their desire Wesley divided them into smaller companies or bands, putting the married or single men, and married or single women, together. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed," was the text on which these bands were formed. The Leader of each band was to describe "his own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be,

concerning their state, sins, and temptations." *The Select Society* was a sort of inner circle within the Bands, which were themselves an inner circle within the United Society.

In close connection with these Band Meetings arose the *Love-feasts*, which, unlike most of his institutions, originated with Wesley himself, or rather were revived by him, for they were the "Agapæ" of the Primitive Church. "In order," he says, "to increase in them a grateful sense of all God's mercies, I desired that, one evening in a quarter, all the men in band; on a second, all the women, would meet; and, on a third, both men and women together; that we might together 'eat bread,' as the ancient Christians did, 'with gladness and singleness of heart.' At these Love-feasts (so we termed them, retaining the name, as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning) our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with 'the meat which perisheth,' but with 'that which endureth to everlasting life.'" Subsequently the Love-feasts were not confined to the bands, but open to the whole Society.

The last institution was the *Penitents'-meeting*, the title of which tells its own tale. Hymns, exhortations, and prayers, were all adapted to the circumstances of penitent backsliders; and it is curious to observe how Wesley seems to hanker after, though he does not purpose to revive, the ancient discipline. He would bring the penitents back to the great "Shepherd and Bishop of their souls," "not by any of the fopperies of the Roman Church, although in some manner countenanced by antiquity. In prescribing hair-shirts, and bodily austerities, we durst not follow even the ancient

Church; although we had unawares, both in dividing *οἱ πίστοι*, the believers, from the rest of the Society, and in separating the penitents from them, and appointing a peculiar service for them." John Wesley was in advance of his age in his discrimination between that which was primitive and that which was distinctly Roman.

As to the mode of worship prescribed by Wesley for his Societies, he carefully arranged that it should be regarded as a supplement, not a substitute, for the worship at the parish church. "Some may say," he writes in 1776, "our own service is public worship. Yes, in a sense, but not such as to supersede the Church service. We never designed it should. If it were designed to be instead of the Church service, it would be essentially defective, for it seldom has the four grand parts of public prayer—deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. Neither is it, even on the Lord's Day, concluded with the Lord's Supper. If the people put ours in the place of the Church service, we *hurt* them that stay with us, and *ruin* them that leave us." In accordance with these sentiments he insisted upon it that the Sunday services in his preaching-houses should not clash with the Church hours, and was very angry when he observed towards the close of his life a tendency to do so. "I met," he writes in 1786, "the classes at Deptford, and was vehemently importuned to order the Sunday service in our room at the same time as that of the Church. It is easy to see that this would be a formal separation from the Church. We fixed both our morning and evening service, all over England, at such hours as not to interfere with the Church; with this very design—that those of the Church, if they

choose it, might attend both one and the other. But to fix it at the same hour, was obliging them to separate either from the Church or us; and this I judge to be not only inexpedient, but totally unlawful for me to do." He persisted until he carried his point, and at last, three months later, told them plainly—"If you are resolved, you may have your service in Church hours; but, remember, from that time you will see my face no more. This struck deep, and from that hour I have heard no more of separating from the Church." The details of the service much resembled those of many Churches in the present day, though they would be rarely found in the eighteenth century. Open benches instead of pews; a separation of the sexes; quick, lively singing; a weekly celebration of the Holy Communion;[1] the due observance of all Church festivals and fasts, including the weekly fast of Friday—these were the things that he loved to the end of his life, and, as far as he could, with his limited supply of clerical help, carried out. In 1788 the trustees of the City Road Chapel tried to alter the rules about the sexes sitting apart, and about no one being allowed to call any seat his own; "thus altering," said John Wesley, indignantly, "the discipline which I have been establishing for fifty years." But, as usual, John Wesley had his way. "We had," he says, "another meeting of the committee, who, after a calm and loving consultation, judged it best (1) that the men and women should sit separate still; and (2) that none should claim any pew as his own, either

[1] This may seem to contradict Wesley's own words, quoted in p. 130; but the explanation is, that the Holy Communion was celebrated only in those chapels (not "preaching houses") which were served by regular clergymen.

in the New Chapel or in West Street." The Holy Communion was celebrated weekly in the New Chapel.

Among the officers of the Societies, passing over the Leaders of the Classes and the Bands, whose duties are sufficiently expressed by their names, and the clergy, who, when they would join with Wesley, held a position quite distinct from any others, we come to the *Lay-Assistants*. It is very characteristic of John Wesley that he would allow no higher title than the humble one of *Assistants* or *Helpers*, if they were not in Holy Orders, to the men whose office was really a very responsible one, far more so than that of any other except Wesley himself. That office was, "in the absence of the minister [that is, a regular clergyman]: (1) to expound every morning and evening; (2) to meet the united society, the bands, the select society, and the penitents once a week; (3) to visit the classes once a quarter; (4) to hear and decide all differences; (5) to put the disorderly back on trial, and to receive on trial for the bands or society; (6) to see that the stewards, the leaders, and the school-masters faithfully discharge their several offices; (7) to meet the leaders of the bands and classes weekly, and the stewards, and to overlook their accounts." It is perfectly marvellous how Wesley could keep men who had so much power put into their hands, in the strictest subordination; but he determined to do it, and he did it.

In what are called "The Large Minutes," the following questions and answers occur—

Q. 23.—What is the office of a Christian Minister?

A.—To watch over souls, as he that must give account.

Q. 24.—In what view may we and our helpers be considered ?

A.—Perhaps as extraordinary messengers (that is, out of the ordinary way) designed (1) To provoke the regular ministers to jealousy ; (2) To supply their lack of service towards them who are perishing for want of knowledge. But how hard is it to abide here ! Who does not wish to be a little higher ?—suppose, to be ordained.

Q. 25.—What is the office of a helper ?

A.—In the absence of a minister,[1] to feed and guide the flock.

John Wesley had to overcome a violent prejudice before he could reconcile himself to the idea of laymen preaching at all ; and had it not been for his mother's advice, he would probably not have overcome it as soon as he did. "To touch this point," he says, "was to touch the apple of my eye." But those who say that his "High Church principles" were the hindrance, only show that they know less of Church history than John Wesley did. He was perfectly right when he contended that lay-preaching was forbidden by no law of the Church. He was quite clear as to what was, and what was not, the exclusive office of the priesthood. "They" (his lay-preachers) "no more take upon them to be priests than to be kings. They take not upon them to administer the sacraments—an honour peculiar to the priests of God. Only, according to their power, they exhort their brethren to continue in the grace of God."[2] When his brother-in-law Hall had the impertinence to urge him to leave the Church in 1745, he replied—"We believe it would not be right for us to administer either

[1] That is, a clergyman of the Church of England.
[2] *Farther Appeal*, &c., *Works*, viii. 224.

Baptism or the Lord's Supper, unless we had a commission so to do from those bishops whom we apprehend to be in a succession from the apostles. We believe there is, and always was, in every Christian Church (whether dependent on the Bishop of Rome or not), an outward priesthood, ordained by Jesus Christ, and an outward sacrifice offered therein by men, authorized to act as ambassadors for Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."[1] His later views on the ministry will be noticed presently; they do not appear to me in the slightest degree to affect the distinction he here draws between what *is* and what is *not* the exclusive work of the priesthood; he then proceeds to justify, as a Churchman, field-preaching, and with less confidence—in fact, far more hesitatingly than he need have done—lay-preaching. Like so many institutions in Wesley's system, that of lay-preaching arose from the press of circumstances rather than from design; and was at first reluctantly permitted, not originated, by the founder. And when it became a distinctive feature of Methodism, it was still hedged in by the strictest precautions. Every preacher had to be a "local" before he was permitted to be an "itinerant," and Wesley kept a tight hand upon them all, impressing upon them strongly, over and over again, that their duty was to obey him implicitly. As there has sometimes been a little confusion about the names, it may be added that John Wesley termed his itinerants "preachers" or "helpers," and that the preacher who had to superintend the work of the whole circuit in which he was placed, and who is now termed "the superintendent," was then called "the assistant."

[1] *Tyerman*, i. 496.

The next officers were the *Stewards*, who, as their name implies, had to manage the temporal affairs of the Societies, which Wesley found "a burden he was not able to bear." Here again one observes with wonder how Wesley was able to secure without fee or reward the services of busy men who gave up a vast amount of time and trouble to their labour of love. Among other duties of the Stewards was that of visiting and relieving the sick; but as the Societies grew, this became too great a burden, and hence arose the appointment of *Visitors of the Sick*, an office which again seemed to Wesley an exact copy of the Primitive Church; for "what," he asks, "were the ancient Deacons? What was Phœbe the Deaconess but such a visitor of the sick?"

The last office which Wesley notices is that of the *School-masters*, and this introduces us to his experiment in Christian education. From the early days of Methodism (1740), there had been a school at Kingswood for the children of the colliers. But in 1748 another school was opened there (the earlier one still going on) for the children of Methodists generally, and preachers in particular. John Wesley took the deepest interest in this school, making the most stringent rules, and writing and editing school-books for its express use. The scholars, who were all to be boarders, "were to be taken in between the years of six and twelve, in order to be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, English, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, history, geography, chronology, rhetoric, logic, ethics, geometry, algebra, physics, and music." There was to be no play, for "he who plays when he is a child will play when he becomes a man." Every child was to rise at four a.m., and spend

an hour in private reading, meditation, singing, and prayer. Every Friday, as the Fast-day of the Church, all the children, whose health would bear it, were to fast till three p.m. Sundays were, of course, devoted to religious exercises, including attendance at the parish Church. Well might Wesley say—"The children of *tender* parents so called (who are indeed offering up their sons and their daughters unto devils) have no business here; for the rules will not be broken, in favour of any person whatever. Nor is any child received unless his parents agree that he shall observe all the rules of the house; and that they will not take him from school, no, not a day, till they take him for good and all;"—so there were to be no holidays.

Instead of being surprised that the experiment was not more successful, one is astonished that it could ever have been carried on at all. What *was* to become of the poor little minds and the poor little bodies of children under such high pressure? John Wesley was alternately in the height of exultation and in the depth of despair about his school; but in spite, or rather in consequence of, the troubles and disappointments in which such an impossible scheme naturally involved him, he clung to it with all the tenacity of his strong nature. "Surely," he writes in 1753, "the importance of this design is apparent, even in the difficulties that attend it. I have spent more money, and time, and care on this than almost any design I ever had, but it is worth all the labour." In 1766, "I will kill or cure. I will have one or the other; a Christian school or none at all." In 1769 he is full of elation; it "comes nearer a Christian school than any I know in the kingdom." In 1781 this elation reaches its climax: Kingswood is infinitely

superior to either Oxford or Cambridge! An elaborate comparison is drawn greatly to the disadvantage of the earlier educational establishments. But alas! in 1783 he is down in despair again. "The school does not, in any wise, answer the design of its institution, either with regard to religion or learning. The children are not religious; they have not the power, and hardly the form, of religion. Neither do they improve in learning better than at other schools; no, nor yet so well." Among other misdemeanours, "they run up and down in the wood, and mix, yea, fight, with the colliers' children. They ought never to play, but they do every day, yea, in the school."[1] Adam Clarke more than bears out this sad account. It is fair to add that the officials at this time were very unsatisfactory; but surely it was the tendency of such a system as John Wesley, in the simplicity of his heart, with the best of motives, but with a strange ignorance of child-nature, instituted at Kingswood, to make the children either little hypocrites or little rebels; and of the two the latter alternative was perhaps the best. John Wesley took a deep interest in children; but in his treatment of them, his own mother's mantle does not seem to have fallen upon him. It is curious to observe how his theory and his natural feelings were sometimes at variance. "I met," he writes on one occasion, "a large number of children, just as much acquainted with God and with the things of God as a wild ass colt, and just as much concerned about them. And yet who can believe that those pretty little creatures have the wrath of God abiding on them?" If we did not know the thorough goodness and sincerity of the man, it would make us quite

[1] Minutes of Conference, 1773.

indignant to read how he worked upon their tender natures and roused the most unwholesome excitement in them.

The organization of the Societies may be said to have been completed by the institution of *Conference* in 1744. The growth of the movement rendered it necessary to make a systematic arrangement of *circuits*, and appoint a certain number of preachers for each circuit. This was perhaps one, but only one, of the reasons which led Wesley to gather a few clergymen and lay preachers together at the Foundry. Wesley himself mentions only the names of the six clergymen who attended this first Conference, but there were also four assistants present. It was a small, informal gathering, hardly equal in point of numbers and dignity to a modern "clerical meeting," but the most important questions of doctrine and discipline were discussed by the little assembly. Wesley very characteristically terms the discussions merely "conversations," but the "minutes" in their quaint form of question and answer are deeply interesting, and of inestimable value to those who desire to know what Wesley's system really was. Year by year the Conference was duly held in London, Bristol, or Leeds; and the proceedings are carefully chronicled. It grew in importance, until in 1784 it assumed a new phase which will be noticed in connection with Wesley's old age.

Such were the Societies, growing in numbers and weight year by year, of which John Wesley was for more than half a century the absolute and supreme ruler. Not that he was impervious to the influence of others, or that he exercised an over-strict discipline in one sense; on the contrary, he was sometimes too liable to be influenced when he would have acted more wisely

if he had followed his own judgment, and he was often too lenient in reproving or excluding offenders. But his will, when he chose to assert it, was law. Few ventured to dispute it, and those who did, invariably had to yield. If it be asked how he attained this complete ascendancy over a vast body of men upon whom he could bring no other than a moral influence to bear, many reasons may be given, but certainly not among them that one which has often been cited as the sufficient explanation. He did not wish to form a sect with himself at the head of it. "I should rejoice," he writes, "(so little ambitious am I to be at the head of any sect or party,) if the very name (of Methodist) might never be mentioned more, but be buried in eternal oblivion"—and I believe the assertion was literally true. He only regarded his elaborate system as means to an end, that end being the promotion of scriptural holiness in heart and life; and the general and profound conviction that this was so, was the chief cause of the unbounded deference that was paid to him. If there had been the faintest suspicion of any ulterior motives, besides the simple and avowed one of doing good, this would have so far weakened his influence. His plainness of speech; his promptitude in action; his habit of command; that air of authority which was natural to all the Wesleys, but to John above all; the transparent simplicity of his life and character; his utter disregard of wealth, position, and high connection; his superior education, and the patent fact that he was a gentleman born and bred; his aptitude for organizing, preaching, and writing—all these combined to confirm his authority; but all would have been of no avail had there not been this sheer confidence in his goodness.

The preachers would, one might have thought, have been the most difficult to manage; hence the following testimony of a good representative of the body is valuable. "I am persuaded," writes Mr. Pawson, "that from the creation of the world there never existed a body of men who looked up to any single person with a more profound degree of reverence than the preachers did to Mr. Wesley; and I am bold to say, that never did any man, no, not St. Paul himself, possess so high a degree of power over so large a body of men as was possessed by him. He used his power, however, for the edification of the people, and abused it as little perhaps as any one man ever did. When any difficulty occurred in governing the preachers, it soon vanished. The oldest, the very best, and those of them that had the greatest influence, were ever ready to unite with him, and to assist him to the utmost of their power. If the preachers were in any danger at all, it was of calling Mr. Wesley 'Rabbi,' and implicitly obeying him in whatsoever he thought proper to command."[1] And as he ruled the preachers, so he did all the members of the Societies. They read what he told them to read, went where he told them to go, dressed as he told them to dress, managed their bodily health as he told them to manage it, nay, married as he told them to marry, and educated their children as he told them to educate them. His government of the Societies was a strictly paternal government; but he showed the love and tenderness and unselfish consideration as well as the unbounded authority of a father. He was never a bishop, but he was in the truest sense of the term a 'Father in God.'

[1] Quoted by Tyerman, iii. 299.

It may be added that he used his vast power over his Societies in trying to make their members good citizens as well as good Christians. It was not *his* fault if they did not set their faces against the prevalent abuses of the day, against which he warned them in his own plain, direct, and forcible way. Take, for instance, his outspoken utterances against smuggling—"Neither sell nor buy anything that has not paid the duty. Defraud not the king any more than your fellow-subject. Never think of being religious unless you are honest. What has a thief to do with religion?"[1] "A smuggler is a thief of the first order, a highwayman or pickpocket of the worst sort. Let not any of those prate about religion! Government should drive these vermin away into lands not inhabited!"[2] And he records with great satisfaction: "That detestable practice of cheating the king is no more found in our Societies. And since that accursed thing has been put away, the work of God has everywhere increased. This Society [Port Isaac] is doubled."[3] It was the same with the very common custom of receiving bribes at elections. "July 1, 1747, St. Ives, Cornwall. I spoke severally to all those who had votes in the ensuing election. I found them such as I desired. Not one would even eat or drink at the expense of him for whom he voted;" and he issued a sort of Pastoral against treating and other malpractices. He was one of the first to protest against "that execrable sum of all villanies, commonly called the Slave Trade" (*Journal*, Feb. 12, 1772). In his *Serious Advice to the People of England* (1778) he writes—"'But we have lost our Negro Trade.' I would to God

[1] To the Societies at Bristol in 1764.
[2] *A Word to a Smuggler*, 1767. [3] *Journal*, Sept. 17th, 1762.

it may never be found more! That we may never more steal and sell our brethren like beasts; never murder them by thousands and tens of thousands. Oh, may this worse than Mahometan, worse than Pagan abomination be removed from us for ever! Never was anything such a reproach to England since it was a nation, as the having a hand in this execrable traffic." He published a tract entitled *Thoughts on Slavery;* and his very last letter (Feb. 24, 1791) was addressed to William Wilberforce, who had just brought the question before Parliament, bidding him, "Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it." When the time came, the strongly-expressed opinion of their venerable founder was not lost upon his Societies. He spoke in terms that could not be mistaken on the subject of common honesty, which he evidently regarded as by no means common. "What servants, journeymen, labourers, carpenters, bricklayers, do as they would be done by? Which of them does as much work as he can? Set him down for a knave that does not. Who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling, particularly in selling horses? Write him knave that does not; and the Methodist knave is the worst of all knaves."[1] He saw the danger of covetousness, into which the very virtues of his followers might lead them, and gave them advice which has become proverbial. "Methodists are diligent and frugal; therefore they increase in goods. We ought not to prevent them from being diligent and frugal; we *must* exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, grow rich. What way,

[1] Minutes of Conference at Leeds, 1766.

then, can we take, that our money may not sink us into the nethermost hell? There is one way, and there is no other under heaven. If those who *gain* all they can, and *save* all they can, will likewise *give* all they can, then the more they gain, the more they will grow in grace, and the more they will lay up in heaven."[1] And finally, both by precept and example, he fostered the spirit of loyalty to the "powers that be." He distinctly regarded loyalty as a part of his religion, and he impressed this feeling upon his followers. There were no better soldiers in the British army than the Methodist soldiers; and their letters to Wesley, which he frequently copies into his *Journal*, show how completely they and their spiritual director agreed on this part of their duty. On the death of George II., he writes, "King George was gathered to his fathers. When will England have a better prince?"[2] The following Friday was set apart, at Wesley's command, by the Societies at Bristol, "as a day of fasting and prayer, for the blessing of God upon the nation, and in particular on his present Majesty." All his old aristocratic feelings were aroused by the Wilkes' riots. "Cobblers, tinkers, porters, and hackney-coachmen think themselves wise enough to instruct both king and council." He himself "is not so deeply learned. Politics were beyond his province; but he would use the privilege of an Englishman to speak his naked thoughts."[3] In his *Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*, he tells the Methodists that "though many who go under that name, hate the king and all

[1] *See* Alexander Knox, *Remains*, i. 88, for a criticism on this.
[2] *Journal*, Oct. 25, 1760.
[3] *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs*, 1768.

his ministers only less than they hate an Arminian, he would no more continue in fellowship with them than with thieves, drunkards, and common swearers." And in his extreme old age, 1789, he preached a most vigorous thanksgiving sermon at Bristol, on "the grand day of rejoicing for his Majesty's recovery." John Wesley has been termed *par excellence* "The Reformer,"[1] but surely there never was a more conservative reformer.

[1] *The Reformer* is the heading of the chapter on John Wesley, in Mrs. Oliphant's *Sketches of the Reign of George II.*

CHAPTER IX.

WESLEY'S FRIENDS AND OPPONENTS.

In an account of John Wesley's friends, the first thing to notice is that by far the most weighty and prominent among them were all clergymen. The clergy, as a body, were, it is said, opposed to Wesley and his system; and so they were. But in spite of that, the clerical element was so far the backbone of the movement, that if you remove it, the whole thing collapses at once. Abstract the part which the clergy took in it, and you sweep away at one fell swoop John and Charles Wesley, Fletcher, Coke, Perronet, Whitefield, Berridge, Grimshaw, Piers, Meriton, and others of minor importance; and what is the residuum? A number of excellent men, no doubt, who worked admirably as subordinates; but the motive force is gone. In short, early Methodism was, strange as it may sound, essentially a clerical movement. Nor can it be said that the prime movers, John and Charles Wesley, were clergymen by accident; they were rocked in the cradle of clericalism, and were steeped with clerical ideas through and through.

This will appear clearly when we turn to him, who, in spite of some differences, in spite of the fact that he

partially withdrew himself from an important branch of the work, must still be regarded as second only to John Wesley himself, and in some respects hardly second even to him.

Charles Wesley was some years his brother's junior, and had early learned to look up to John as his guide. But it was not in the Wesley nature to submit blindly to any man; and Charles Wesley soon showed that he had a will of his own, and was both competent and ready to act on his own independent judgment. On his return from Georgia he fell under the same powerful influence which affected John; and the two brothers went hand in hand in their revival work. Charles was as active an itinerant, as vigorous and successful a preacher, as fearless and calm a confronter of mobs, for several years as John himself. In John Wesley's many accounts of his early work as a revivalist, he always links his brother's name with his own, and evidently regards him, not as a follower, but as a coadjutor quite on a level with himself. It is always "my brother and I." But the differences of temperament between the two brothers soon began to show themselves. Charles was of a warmer, more impetuous, less placable disposition than John; but he was a keener judge of character, and far less easily imposed upon. He regarded with grave suspicion the physical convulsions which resulted from his brother's preaching, and when similar phenomena began to accompany his own, he took remarkably efficacious measures for testing their reality, and for putting a stop to them when he thought them unreal. On the other hand, he was rescued by his brother from the dangerous attraction of Moravian "stillness," though his latest biographer gives good reason for believing

that his peril in this direction has been exaggerated.[1] Charles Wesley was quite free from a tendency, which seems to have run in the Wesley family, to fall in love with the wrong people, and to make ill-assorted matches. No Sophia Hopkeys, Grace Murrays, or Widow Vazeilles ever disturbed *his* peace. He married a lady in his own sphere of life, and found in her a true help-meet; and he had no scruple about interfering to prevent John from marrying unsuitably. In 1753, when John seemed likely to die, Charles flatly refused to be his successor, declaring with the true Wesley frankness and promptitude that he had "neither the body, nor the mind, nor grace, nor talents for it." His most serious disagreement with his brother was about the relations of the Societies to the Church. Both brothers were strong Churchmen; but Charles was by far the most consistent and clear-sighted of the two. He saw, what everybody except John Wesley himself seems to have seen, that the Societies, and especially the preachers, were drifting away from the Church, and he exerted himself with characteristic energy to stop what he deemed the dangerous tendency. In his *Reasons against Separation*, John concludes with asserting that it is *inexpedient* to separate; but Charles, in affixing his signature, added that it was also *unlawful*. He had a much lower opinion of the lay preachers than John had; and when the chapel in the City Road was opened in 1776, would not hear of their officiating in it on the Lord's day. The Anti-Church feeling in the Societies was probably the chief reason why Charles Wesley ceased to itinerate from 1756 onwards, though the

[1] See Telford's *Life of Charles Wesley*.

fact of his being happily married, with a family growing up around him, may also have caused him to desire comparative rest, or rather a settled home. This fear of a schism, combined with the fact that Charles never *could* take kindly to Mrs. John Wesley, produced a certain estrangement between the two brothers, of which John complains touchingly in 1771. But there was no real diminution of love and respect on either side; no, not even when the relations were strained to the utmost by John Wesley's "ordinations" in his old age. Apart from family affection, which was very strong among the Wesleys, John always felt that his brother was his nearest, dearest, and best friend. He thoroughly appreciated the services which Charles rendered to the cause by his wonderful gift of sacred poetry. He regarded his hymns, not only as elegant and elevated expressions of praise, but as "a body of practical and experimental divinity." And so they really were; they answered in effect the purposes of a creed to the Societies. Abstract confessions of faith might make little impression upon the poor and uneducated, who constituted the majority of John Wesley's followers, and whom he certainly loved and valued most; but the poorest and most unlettered could remember the verses of a hymn which had been sung by thousands, with all the fervour of impassioned souls, in the preaching-houses, at the class meetings, or under the blue canopy of heaven. The teaching of the sermon became stereotyped in the hymn, which was enshrined in the hearts of many, and remembered on a death-bed when all else was forgotten. John Wesley's keen eye for the practical thus led him to attach an additional value to his brother's hymns, while his abhorrence of

anything which savoured of bad taste caused him to welcome with peculiar delight compositions which were more calculated to provoke "the critic to turn Christian, than the Christian to turn critic."[1]

Are we to term the last of the trio who certainly stand pre-eminent in the history of early Methodism, a friend or an opponent of John Wesley? Certainly from John Wesley's own standpoint, a friend. "You may read," he says, "Whitefield against Wesley, but you shall never read Wesley against Whitefield." Until the unfortunate question of "the decrees" intervened, George Whitefield and John Wesley were of one heart and soul in their evangelistic work. It was Whitefield, as we have seen, who set the example of field-preaching, which Wesley followed reluctantly. It was Whitefield who committed the continuance of his work in London, when he went to Georgia, to the Wesleys; and, on his return, was more than satisfied with the result. It was Whitefield whose name was far more prominently connected with the commencement of the movement than Wesley's own. What evil genius led George Whitefield to the conviction that it was his peculiar mission to elucidate the mysteries—for there were many—of what was vaguely termed Calvinism, we know not. But the case is not a peculiar one. As a general rule, one finds that the weaker the divine, the profounder the subjects he aspires to deal with; and Whitefield, though a mighty preacher, was a feeble divine. It is easy enough to see why John Wesley thought it necessary to take any part in the matter. He might, indeed,

[1] Let credit be given where credit is due. This terse and epigrammatic sentence was not, as it has been sometimes represented, John Wesley's, but John Byrom's.

have remembered his mother's wise counsel when he was inclined to puzzle his young mind about these profound mysteries—"Such studies tend more to confound than to inform the understanding." But if Calvinism tended, as John Wesley thought it did, to Antinomianism, it struck at the root of his most cherished project—the spread of scriptural holiness throughout the land. The unhappy dispute produced a temporary alienation between the two good men, but the breach was entirely healed, mainly through the instrumentality of Charles Wesley; and henceforth Whitefield and the two brothers became "a threefold cord which could not be broken," until the death of Whitefield in 1770; when, in accordance with the dying man's own direction, John Wesley preached his funeral sermon.

Whitefield, however, was never so much a man after Wesley's own heart as John Fletcher, with whom he became acquainted just at the time when he seemed to be most in need of help; that is, when his own health seemed to be breaking down, and when his brother Charles was gradually withdrawing from itinerant work. "When my bodily strength failed," he says, "and none in England were able and willing to assist me, He sent me help from the mountains of Switzerland, and an helpmeet for me in every respect. Where could I have found such another?" The personal history of him who was *par excellence* the saint of Methodism must be sought elsewhere.[1] Suffice it to say, that Wesley found in Fletcher a supporter whom he could thoroughly trust in every way, a man whose piety was a shining example to all, and whose mind, if of a somewhat thin

[1] See *inter alia, The English Church in the Eighteenth Century.*

texture, was elegant and refined, and improved by culture to the finest possible point. So far from their friendship splitting on the rock of Calvinism, Wesley derived from Fletcher by far the most valuable aid he ever received in checking the tendency to Antinomianism, which he trembled to see in some who were called Methodists. He appreciated this aid all the more because it relieved him of a work which of all others he abhorred most—the work of writing on controversial divinity. So highly did he value Fletcher, that he wrote to him in 1773, when he expected that, in the course of nature, he must soon let fall the reins of government which he had long held with so firm a hand:—"The wise men of the world will say, 'When Mr. W. drops, then all comes to an end.' And so surely it will, unless, before God calls him hence, one is found to stand in his place. For *οὐκ ἄγαθον πολυκοιρανίη*. Come out then in the name of God! Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty! Come while I am alive, and capable of labour! Come while I am able, God assisting, to build you up in the faith, and introduce you to the people!"[1]

The hardy old man, however, was destined to survive his younger and more delicate friend several years. He preached his funeral sermon in 1785, from the suggestive text, "Mark the perfect man," &c., and at once set about writing his life. Wesley always thought it a pity that Fletcher should waste his sweetness on the desert air of Madeley, which he calls "an exceeding pleasant village, encompassed with trees and hills."[2] He believed that even in that narrow sphere, "the

[1] Quoted from *Tyerman*, iii. 148. [2] *Journal*, July 1764.

immense pains which Mr. Fletcher took with his people" was not so successful as it ought to have been, owing to the want of discipline in the Church.

Another clerical friend of John Wesley who, in one sense, should be ranked higher than even Fletcher or Charles Wesley himself, was Mr. Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham. Charles Wesley called him "the Archbishop of the Methodists," and he was regarded by both the brothers as a sort of ultimate Court of Appeal. In 1751, when they were in great anxiety about the preachers, they conferred with Mr. Perronet as a confidential adviser, and drew up a formal agreement between themselves, of which the following was one of the articles: "That if we should ever disagree in our judgment, we will refer the matter to Mr. Perronet." Earlier in the same year John Wesley had consulted Mr. Perronet on the delicate question of marriage, and was unfortunately guided by his advice: "Feb. 2, 1751. Having received a full answer from Mr. P., I was clearly convinced that I ought to marry." It was at Mr. Perronet's vicarage, and after much consultation with its master, that John wrote to Mr. Fletcher, urging him to be his successor. In short, Shoreham Vicarage was a favourite retreat of John Wesley. There he combined the double advantage of rest and leisure with the trusted counsel of the Vicar: "Oct. 11, 1746. I had the pleasure of spending an hour with Mr. P."; "Nov. 20, 1749. I rode to Mr. Perronet's of Shoreham, that I might be at leisure to write." Such entries are very frequent in the Journals; they end with a touching notice of the good old man's death: "May 2, 1785. So ended the holy and happy life of Mr. Vincent Perronet, in the 92nd year of his age. I follow hard after him in

years. O, that I may follow him in holiness, and that my last end may be like his!" Mr. Perronet is the very first-named among the evangelical clergy with whom John Wesley proposed to enter into a kind of informal union. It was, however, as a "guide, philosopher and friend," rather than as an active worker in any larger sphere than his own parish, that Mr. Perronet was valued by John Wesley, who never complains, as he complained about Fletcher, that the Vicar of Shoreham confined his labours to Shoreham, but on the contrary, frequently notices the immense amount of good he was doing there.

It was not until late in life (1776), that John Wesley met the last of the five who may be said to stand in the first rank of his clerical friends. "Aug. 14, 1776. Here [Kingston, Somerset] I found a clergyman, Dr. Coke, a gentleman-commoner of Jesus College in Oxford, who came twenty miles on purpose. I had much conversation with him; and a union then began which I trust shall never end." And it never did. It was at the time when Fletcher's health had begun to break down, while Charles Wesley had long ceased to itinerate. One can well understand, therefore, the ardour with which John Wesley welcomed an ally who, by position and education, was qualified to take their place; and the way in which he welcomed him was very characteristic—"The Doctor expressed his doubts respecting the propriety of confining himself to one congregation. Wesley clasped his hands, and in a manner peculiarly his own, said, 'Brother, go out, go out, and preach the gospel to all the world.'"[1] In the

[1] Tyerman, iii. 214.

following year Wesley records—"Oct. 19, 1777. I went forward to Tiverton with Dr. C., who, being dismissed from his curacy, has bid adieu to his honourable name, and determined to cast in his lot with us." It is only fair to add that this dismissal from his curacy can hardly be regarded as an act of tyranny. "On Sunday," we are told,[1] "after the second lesson, he (Coke) would read a paper of his appointments for the ensuing week, with the place and time of service"—that is, in connection with the Methodists. Now how many incumbents in the present day would approve of their curates reading, entirely on their own responsibility, when they had no right to read anything at all except what they were told to do, announcements which were extremely distasteful to the body of their hearers? However, Dr. Coke became John Wesley's first lieutenant; and a most vigorous and efficient one he was. He was full of zeal and energy, but he was not always, at least from a Churchman's point of view, the best adviser that Wesley could have found. It must be repeated that though John Wesley ruled his Societies with absolute sway, he was himself singularly liable to be swayed by those in whom he had confidence; it was, therefore, highly important, considering the immense power he possessed, that his trusted counsellors should not only be pious and earnest, but judicious men. Dr. Coke had many excellent qualities, but "judicious" is not the epithet that would be most appropriate to him. In the later years of Wesley's life, he was certainly second only to Wesley himself. He used to visit the Societies in Ireland alternately with Wesley, having

[1] Tyerman, iii. 214.

equal power. He was one of the three clergymen who were joint incumbents, as it were, of the new chapel in the City Road. He was the father of Wesleyan Foreign Missions, and grudged no labour or hardship in that most important branch of work. He was one of John Wesley's executors, and the joint-author of the earliest biography of him.

There were many other clergymen who did Wesley yeoman's service by paving the way for him, and countenancing his efforts in their respective parishes and neighbourhoods. Two such have been noticed, Grimshaw of Haworth, and Berridge of Everton. Others were the four clergymen who attended the first Conference, Messrs. Piers, Meriton, Taylor, and Hodges;[1] Mr. Richardson, a "curate" of the Wesleys, in the City Road chapel; Mr. David Simpson, a clergyman of Macclesfield, a place which John Wesley dearly loved; Mr. Baddiley of Hayfield in Derbyshire; Messrs. James Creighton, Peard Dickinson, and E. Smyth, of all of whom space forbids any lengthened notice.

But the clergy of the Evangelical school, which almost reached its zenith before the old man's long life closed, were never, as a body, very cordial admirers of John Wesley. And no wonder; for they really belonged to a different school of thought. It is true that *his* cardinal doctrine, justification by faith, was also *their* cardinal doctrine. But even on this point, when it came to be explained, there was a marked difference,

[1] A short account of these will be found in Mr. R. Denny Urlin's *Churchman's Life of Wesley*, p. 121. And here I must venture to express my deep obligations to this and the earlier volume, *John Wesley's Place in Church History*. The admirable Christian tone of these books on the one hand, and of Mr. Telford's *Life* on the other, must be recognized by all impartial readers.

—so marked, that it was one point of the fiercest controversy in which John Wesley, to his sorrow, was ever engaged. In fact, Wesley throughout took a different standpoint from theirs. *They* took their stand on the Reformation in the sixteenth century; *he* on the Primitive Church. *They*, again, were all, more or less, inclined to Calvinism; *he* was a vehement anti-Calvinist. He was at once too much and too little of a Churchman for them: too much, for he laid great stress upon many distinctly Church usages, about which they were either absolutely indifferent, or positively disliked; too little, for he made light of the parochial system, and had no scruple about invading any man's parish, whether the incumbent was an Evangelical or not, and planting his Societies there. This brought him into collision with such men as Mr. Venn of Huddersfield, Mr. Walker of Truro, and Mr. Adam of Winteringham, and drew forth a letter of remonstrance from his old college pupil, Mr. Hervey of Weston Favell, though the latter was not personally affected by any invasion of the Societies. In fact there does not seem to me to be the least reason for wondering that John Wesley's repeated attempts at establishing an *entente cordiale* between himself and the Evangelical clergy by the formation of a sort of union, in which everybody was to be allowed to think pretty much as he pleased, should have proved abortive.

Another and far more numerous class of clerical opponents were those who, for one cause or another, hated above all things every form of what they vaguely called "enthusiasm." It is unjust to set this class down indiscriminately as men without any sense of religion. Such sweeping censures are far too common, and have

sometimes been passed by men who ought to have known better. The 18th century clergy were not, as a body, irreligious men;[1] they did not, indeed, take a very high spiritual standard; but their religion, as far as it went, was real; and there was a robust manliness about them, which, though it sometimes degenerated into coarseness, might yet teach some useful lessons to the present age. Bishops Warburton and Lavington were types of this class. They strangely misunderstood John Wesley, and laid themselves open to his unanswerable retorts; the one, when in his *Doctrine of Grace* he affirmed the direct, personal influence of the Holy Spirit to be limited to the Apostolic age; the other, when in his *Enthusiasm of the Papists and Methodists compared* he described in effect Methodism as Popery in disguise; but they were not mere heathens.

It should be remembered, too, that both language and manners were rougher in those days than they are now. Bishops do not talk now, as Bishop Warburton talked then about "crews of scoundrels," and about "trimming the rogues' jackets for them"; and in times when bull-fighting and cock-fighting were favourite amusements, deeds were regarded as mere horse-play which would now be accounted downright cruelty. The men who would now be content with writing an indignant letter to *The Times*, would have thought it no harm then to show their disapproval by sanctioning a ducking in a horsepond, or a shower of rotten eggs.

[1] Of course there were very many exceptions, far more than I am happy to believe there are at the present day. But I make the statement in the text most deliberately, after long study, not of second-hand, but of original, sources; and I can fully bear out what Canon Hockin states about the clergy of one particular district in an appendix to *John Wesley and Modern Methodism*.

Nor is it at all wonderful that quiet clergymen, who, in a sleepy sort of way, were trying to do some good in their parishes, did not welcome with open arms men who certainly set their people by the ears, and raised a spirit of disturbance which they could not quell. There is a passage in one of Charles Wesley's letters to his brother which speaks volumes. John had reminded him of one of his early poems in which he speaks of "Heathenish priests and mitred infidels," and Charles replied—"That juvenile line of mine I disown, renounce, and with shame recant. . . . I never knew of more than one 'mitred infidel,' and for him I took Mr. Law's word." [1] Now if a cultured clergyman, a warm friend of the Church, and a most amiable and charitable man like Charles Wesley, had yet to admit that he had thus spoken without the book, is it likely that men of a different stamp, whose very *raison d'être* as revivalists depended upon the badness of the clergy, would be more particular about investigating the truth of their accusations? And is it reasonable to expect that the clergy would like to hear themselves thus recklessly accused?

This is not intended as a justification of the treatment which John Wesley too frequently met with in the outset of his career as a reformer. It is admitted that there is another side of the question; but that side has been so frequently and prominently put forward, that it seemed necessary to redress the balance by insisting upon what, after many years' study of the 18th century, I am persuaded ought to be taken into account. It is most deplorable that a reformer, who was so warmly attached

[1] Tyerman, iii. 446.

to the Church as John Wesley was, could not have been utilized, instead of repelled. But it is an easy thing to be wise after the event; and, looking at the matter from an 18th century point of view, I venture to think that the difficulties in the way of cordial co-operation were far more numerous, and far less easy to be surmounted than is commonly supposed.[1]

The obstacles, however, which John Wesley met with from without, were less formidable than those he met with from within; but this is so important a subject that it must be treated of in a separate chapter.

[1] Mr. Abbey's remarks on this point, in his *English Church and its Bishops* (1700—1800), are, in my opinion, unanswerable.

CHAPTER X.

INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES.

"WHAT can hurt the Methodists so-called, but the Methodists? Only let them not fight one another, let not brother lift up sword against brother, and no weapon forged against them shall prosper." So wrote John Wesley on May 29, 1764, when he had already had much painful experience of the damage which internal disputes did to the cause he had at heart. Quite from its commencement, the course of the revival began to be checked by this hindrance. On his return from Herrnhuth in 1738, Wesley found the little Society in London torn with disputes, which, however, the awe of his presence soon checked. But at the close of the next year they had broken out again with redoubled force. "Dec. 29, 1739," he writes, "came to London. Here I found every day the dreadful effects of our brethren's reasoning and disputing with each other. Scarce one in ten retained his first love, and most of the rest were in the utmost confusion, biting and devouring one another." Half a year later (June 19, 1740), he found that old bone of contention, predestination, fiercely disputed at Deptford. The account of a conversation

with one of these hot disputants illustrates alike his wonderful forbearance, which was one of the secrets of his success, and the sort of material he had to deal with. "Mr. Acourt said, 'What, do you refuse admitting a person into your Society, only because he differs from you in opinion?' I answered, 'No; but what opinion do you mean?' He said, 'That of election. I hold a certain number is elected from eternity, and those must and shall be saved; and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned; and many of your Society hold the same.' I replied, 'I never asked whether they hold it or no. Only let them not trouble others by disputing about it.' He said, 'Nay, but I will dispute about it.' 'What, wherever you come?' 'Yes, wherever I come.' 'Why, then, should you come among us, who you know are of another mind?' 'Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you right.' 'I fear your coming with this view would neither profit you nor us.' He concluded, 'Then I will go and tell all the world that you and your brother are false prophets. And I tell you, in one fortnight you will be all in confusion.'"

The dispute which led to the transference of Wesley's Society from Fetter Lane to the Foundry in 1740 has already been noticed. Then Kingswood became the scene of disorder. John Cenwick, Wesley's master at the school for colliers there, and one of his first lay-preachers, was the ringleader, and many members of the Band Society had to be expelled, "not for their opinions, but for scoffing at the word and ministers of God; for tale-bearing, back-biting, and evil-speaking; for dissembling, lying and slandering." They had "made it their common practice to scoff at the preaching of Mr. John and Charles Wesley" (Journal, Feb. 28, 1741).

Whitefield had now returned from America, and the paper war which had been waged between him and the Wesleys when the Atlantic divided them, was exchanged for another form of hostility, and produced another split in the camp.

At Epworth in 1751 Wesley found "a poor, dead, and senseless people," and was informed that "some of our preachers there had diligently gleaned up and retailed all the evil they had heard of me; some had quite laid aside our hymns as well as the doctrine they had formerly preached; one of them had frequently spoke against our rules, and the others quite neglected them."

Norwich was for many years a troublesome place. "I met," he writes, Sept. 9, 1759, "the Society at seven, and told them in plain terms that they were the most ignorant, self-conceited, self-willed, untractable, disorderly, disjointed Society that I knew in the three kingdoms. And God applied it to their hearts; so that many were profited, but I do not find that one was offended." But alas! the improvement was not lasting; for four years later, Oct. 14, 1763, he had to tell them again—"For many years I have had more trouble with this Society than with half the Societies in England put together. With God's help, I will try you one year longer; and I hope you will bring forth better fruit." Nov. 4, 1770 he writes—"In all England I find no people like those at Norwich. They are eminently as unstable as water;" and as late as Oct. 22, 1785, he had to tell them—"Of all the people I have seen in the kingdom, for between forty and fifty years, you have been the most fickle, and yet the most stubborn." It was the misfortune of Norwich to have in the early

stage of the movement a baneful element of disorder in an able and very influential but thoroughly bad man, James Wheatley, who combined a high profession with a low practice.

About the year 1763 fresh troubles broke out among the London Societies, Thomas Maxfield and George Bell being the ringleaders of the malcontents. Maxfield was one of the first of John Wesley's lay-preachers, and had, through the kind offices of Wesley himself, obtained Holy Orders from the Bishop of Londonderry, who said to him, "Sir, I ordain you to assist that good man, that he may not work himself to death." Bell had so exalted an idea of his own powers that he had the monstrous impiety to touch a blind man's eyes with spittle, and say, "Ephphatha." Both were jealous of the authority of the two brothers, and raised a rebellion against them. John Wesley puts the matter very mildly when he says that he "disliked in Bell and Maxfield something that had the appearance of enthusiasm—overvaluing feelings and inward impressions; mistaking the mere work of imagination for the voice of the Spirit; expecting the end without the means; and undervaluing reason, knowledge, and wisdom in general." He behaved with his usual forbearance. "I desired," he says (Journal, Jan. 7, 1763), "George Bell, with two or three of his friends, to meet me with one or two others. We took much pains to convince him of his mistakes, particularly that which he had lately adopted—that the end of the world was to be on Feb. 28. But we could make no impression upon him at all. He was as unmoved as a rock." Wesley persevered, and on Jan. 23, he says, "In order to check a growing evil, I preached on 'Judge not, and

ye shall not be judged.' But it had just the contrary effect on many, who construed it into a satire upon G. Bell, one of whose friends said, 'If the devil had been in the pulpit, he would not have preached such a sermon',"—as he certainly would have not. Bell and the rest seem to have been tools in the hands of Maxfield. "All this time," proceeds Wesley, "I did not want for information from all quarters, that Mr. M. was at the bottom of all this; that he was continually spiriting up all with whom I was intimate against me; he told them that I was not capable of teaching them, and insinuated that none was, but himself." Wesley, however, was very firm; he would not allow Bell to pray at the Foundry. "The reproach of Christ," he said, "I am willing to bear, but not the reproach of enthusiasm, if I can help it." The upshot of it all was that some in the London Societies threw up their tickets, saying, "Blind John is not capable of teaching us; we will keep to Mr. Maxfield."

By far the bitterest opponents John Wesley ever had were the Calvinists. I place their opposition under the head of internal disputes, because, though there was a marked distinction between the Calvinistic and the Arminian Methodists, they both professed to join in one great cause, viz. the revival of spiritual religion, to promote which was John Wesley's grand object. It really is difficult at the present day to understand why the minds of these good men should have been lashed into a fury by the discussion of a profound mystery, which far more able and learned divines had, long before *their* time, in vain tried to solve. Not only Christian charity but common decency was thrown to the winds in the language used *to*, and *about*, John

Wesley in the miserable squabble which is dignified by the name of the Calvinistic controversy. If it were not for the awful solemnity of the subject, it would be difficult to repress a smile at the ludicrous way in which, with quite unconscious humour—the dreary vituperations are not relieved by one gleam of *conscious* humour—some of his adversaries expressed themselves. Thus, as early as 1740, Whitefield wrote—"With Universal Redemption brother Charles pleases the world; brother John follows him in everything"—which, by the way, was very unlike "brother John." "I believe no atheist can more preach against predestination than they"—as if atheists were in the habit of preaching either for or against predestination. Whitefield's Christian, placable character, however, prevented him from indulging in abuse. But in 1744, a Mr. Cudworth, an Antinomian, gave vent to the remarkable utterance that he "abhorred John Wesley as much as he did the Pope, and ten times more than he did the devil"—a strange estimate of the relative harm which these three enemies of religion were doing. These, however, were but preludes to the Calvinistic controversy proper; the germs of which may perhaps be traced to a little dispute which arose between Wesley and his old Oxford pupil and son in the Gospel, James Hervey. It was natural that the latter should consult his old tutor and spiritual father about a work which he was preparing for publication, *Theron and Aspasio;* but he could scarcely have expected that a book which strongly advocated Calvinistic views, and which was written in a most florid and lymphatic style, should find favour with one who was known to be a decided anti-Calvinist, and who above all things aimed at plainness,

terseness, and strength in his writings. After Hervey's death, his letters to Wesley on the subject were published, to Wesley's great annoyance. This was in 1765; three years later the expulsion of six Methodist students from St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, was made the subject of a dispute between the Calvinists and the Arminians. These premonitory sputterings issued at last in a violent explosion. In 1770, Lady Huntingdon excluded from her college at Trevecca all Arminians, including the saintly Fletcher, whose office was something like that of a Visitor at an Oxford or Cambridge college, and Joseph Benson, its able head-master. Both were intimate friends and allies of John Wesley, and he remonstrated with Lady Huntingdon on the proceeding. He was not sorry for the opportunity of doing so; for "I had been convinced deeply," he says, "for several years that I had not done my duty to that valuable woman; that I had not told her what I was convinced no one else would dare to do, and what I knew she would bear from no other person, but possibly might bear from me." In the famous Minutes of the Conference in 1770, Wesley stated plainly but temperately enough his anti-Calvinistic views. Lady Huntingdon and her relative, Mr. Shirley, were up in arms at once; and, not to enter into the complications of the dispute, it may be said briefly that the storm now burst forth in all its fury, and raged at intervals for nearly eight years. The whole matter was most distasteful to John Wesley, who was only too glad to allow his friends, Mr. Sellon, Mr. Olivers, and above all Mr. Fletcher, to fight the battle instead of him. But the weight of the storm fell upon the devoted head of him who was regarded as

the chief offender. Wesley exasperated them all the more because he persisted in holding aloof from the fray. "Let Mr. W.," writes Toplady, "fight his own battles, but let him not fight by proxy; let his cobblers keep to their stalls, his tinkers mend their brazen vessels, his barbers confine themselves to their blocks and basins, his blacksmiths blow more suitable coals than those of controversy; every man in his own order." Wesley is elegantly described as "slinking behind one of his drudges." "An old fox tarred and feathered," "Pope John," "Little John" (a delicate allusion to his short stature), "a designing wolf," "the most perfect and holy and sly, that e'er turn'd a coat, or could pilfer and lie," "a dealer in stolen wares," "as unprincipled as a rook, and as silly as a jackdaw," "a gray-headed enemy of all righteousness," "a venal profligate," "an apostate miscreant," "the most rancorous hater of the Gospel system that ever appeared in this land," "a low and puny tadpole in divinity"—these and similar expressions actually occur *da capo* in the writings of Sir Richard and Rowland Hill, Toplady, and Wesley's old friend and coadjutor, Berridge, respecting a man who, like themselves, had the revival of spiritual religion most deeply at heart. It must be confessed that the writers on Wesley's side (Fletcher always excepted) showed themselves almost as great adepts in the art of calling names as their antagonists, who culled a choice selection of flowers of rhetoric to show that the Arminian Oliver could match the Calvinistic Roland. Happily we have only to do with the quarrel so far as John Wesley was concerned in it, and as it would undoubtedly have been his mind that the whole matter should pass into deserved oblivion, there let it rest.

After the subsidence of the Calvinistic controversy, there was comparative quiet within the camp of John Wesley; but disorder still broke out now and then. In 1779, "for the first time Wesley's supreme and absolute power was professedly and openly resisted," [1] which led to the expulsion of Alexander McNab from the pulpit at Bath in spite of the Conference. John Wesley not only asserted but carried his point, that the Conference had literally no power whatever, but that the whole and sole authority over every Society rested ultimately in himself. It was an amazing claim, and it was well that his aims were as pure and unselfish as they were, for this unlimited sway over a large and increasing body of men would have been a dangerous weapon in the hands of any one who was not uniformly actuated by the love of God and the love of man for God's sake.

If he met with an exceptional amount of opposition, it was counterbalanced by an amount of authority which it has fallen to the lot of few men to wield.

[1] Tyerman, iii. 308.

CHAPTER XI.

LITERARY WORK.

THE very last thing of which John Wesley was ambitious was literary fame. In nothing does the intensely practical character of his mind come out more strongly than in his writings. Whether it is long treatise or short tract, whether it is prose or poetry, whether it is original composition or the reprinting or abridging of the works of others, whether it is a simple school-book or one on controversial divinity, whether it is a sermon or a commentary or a journal, it is all the same; he has always some immediate practical end in view; and in almost every case we can trace the reason of his writing what he did write in the particular circumstances which were at that particular time before him. Hence we may admit, to a certain extent, the truth of the remark of a very thoughtful critic, that "on 'The Works of the Rev. John Wesley,' the funeral formula is already uttered, 'Dust to dust,'"[1] and at the same time maintain with perfect consistency that John Wesley was an

[1] *Wesley and Methodism*, by Isaac Taylor, p. 208. A very different estimate, however, of the value of John Wesley's writings is given by Mr. Alexander Knox, who was at least as thoughtful a man as Mr. Isaac Taylor. See Knox, *Remains*, i. 278, &c.

exceedingly effective, able, and interesting writer. For it is too much to expect the general reader to transport himself mentally into the 18th century; and yet he must do so, if he would rightly appreciate John Wesley's writings.

It would, of course, be absurd to contend that anything which John Wesley wrote is of the same calibre as the great works of his contemporaries, such as Butler or Waterland; but if we are content to ignore his writings as obsolete works out of which all the virtue is gone, we are ignoring a very vivid and complete picture of the times, as well as a very life-like portrait of one of the most interesting and influential men *of* those times. So that merely from the historical, to say nothing of the religious, point of view, it would be a great mistake to be satisfied with regarding Wesley as he appears when filtered through the mind of any critic or biographer, however able, without contemplating him as he appears in his own pages.

But in considering John Wesley as a writer, the same difficulty occurs which we found in considering him as an itinerant. As in the one capacity he appeared to be here, there, and everywhere in body, so in the other he appears to be here, there, and everywhere in mind. For more than half a century, scarcely a year elapsed without the press being busy with something, generally with several things, for which John Wesley was responsible. How did he find time for it all? Simply by being in the literal sense of the term "a Methodist"; that is, by methodically parcelling out every hour, almost every minute, so that there should never be any waste. "You do not," he writes in 1777, "understand my manner of life. Though I am always in haste, I am

never in a hurry, because I never undertake more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true I travel four or five thousand miles a year; but I generally travel alone in my carriage, and, consequently, am as retired ten hours in a day as if I was in a wilderness. On other days I never spend less than three hours, frequently ten or twelve, in a day alone. Yet I find time to visit the sick and poor—a matter of absolute duty." Let us see how he employed his time, so far as literary work was concerned.

He first appeared in print in 1733 with *A Collection of Prayers for every Day in the Week;* this was followed in 1734 by an abridgment of John Norris' *Treatise on Christian Perfection.* In 1735 three publications appeared—a reprint of his father's *Letter of Advice to a Young Clergyman;* a sermon on *The Trouble and Rest of Good Men;* and an edition, with a long Preface, of the *De Imitatione Christi,* the volume which is referred to in his correspondence with Law. In 1737 he published his first Hymn-book at Charlestown in America. Then in 1739 came *Hymns and Sacred Poems, by John and Charles Wesley,* twenty of them being translations from the German by John. In 1740 another Hymn-book came out with many Hymns on Christian Perfection. In 1741 appeared *An Extract from the Life of M. de Renty,* whom John Wesley regarded as a great saint, Roman though he was[1]; and an *Abridgment of Norris' Reflections on the Conduct of Human Life.* The first publication of 1742 was again a work of Norris, his

[1] In the Preface of his *Life of Mr. Fletcher,* written many years later, he says he had long despaired of finding so holy a person as the Marquis de Renty. Mr. Fletcher alone had in his view appeared to equal him.

Treatise of Christian Prudence. John Norris, it may be observed, was a personal friend of Wesley's father, and was the only Oxford man who was prominent among the English Platonists; he was the worthy successor (several intervening) of the saintly George Herbert at Bemerton, and belonged to the same type of Churchmen. It is interesting to notice that among the very first books with which Wesley supplied his followers were two written by such a man. In the same year he most reluctantly became a controversial writer. "I now," he writes, "tread an untried path with fear and trembling —fear not of my adversary, but of myself." The work was, *The Principles of a Methodist, in Answer to the Rev. Josiah Tucker.* The year 1743 produced his first Tract, in the modern sense of the term, and the First Part of one of the most telling of all his writings, *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.* In 1744 came out, *A Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems,* dedicated to Lady Huntingdon; an Abridgment of Law's *Serious Call;* and a reprint of Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man,* the very book which his mother had recommended to him twenty years before. The year 1745 commenced with two works of a very different type; an Abridgment of Jonathan Edwards' *Thoughts on the Revival in New England,* and *Extracts from Baxter's Aphorisms on Justification;* and in the same year came out that very remarkable volume, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper, by John and Charles Wesley, with Dr. Brevint's Preface concerning the Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice.* Several Tracts were written in this year: *An Earnest Persuasion to keep the Sabbath-day holy; A Word for a Swearer; A Word in Season, or Address to an Englishman,* which was called forth by the alarm about the

Pretender, and was of course an exhortation to loyalty to King George; *A Word to a Drunkard;* and *Advice to the People called Methodists;* and this busy year saw also the First Part of *The Farther Appeal*, &c., which was even more telling than its predecessor, *The Earnest Appeal.* In 1746 we have another Tract, *A Word of Advice to Saints and Sinners; Lessons for Children;* a controversial piece entitled *The Principles of the Methodists further explained*, in answer to the Rev. T. Church, an able writer; and Parts II. and III. of the *Farther Appeal.* In 1747 appeared two Tracts on political subjects: *A Word to a Protestant*, on the duty of keeping out Romanism in the shape of the Pretender; and *A Word to a Freeholder*, written on the eve of the Exeter election; *A Letter to the Bishop of London* (Dr. Gibson) defending himself very temperately against the strictures upon the Methodists in his lordship's "Charge"; and a curious book, *Primitive Physic*, in which Wesley put into print the medical advice which he had given gratuitously to his people. The year 1748 produced several Class-books in Latin for Kingswood School; *A Word to a Methodist on his Duty of adhering to the Church; A Letter to a Friend concerning Tea* (Wesley at this time waged a fierce war against tea-drinking); and *A Letter to a Person lately joined to the People called Quakers*—a step of which Wesley strongly disappproved. In 1749 we have some more school-books; *A Letter to Dr. Conyers Middleton on his Free Enquiry*, one of the few instances in which John Wesley took the initiative in theological controversy; and the *Plain Account of the People called Methodists*, in a letter to Mr. Perronet, which has been largely quoted above; a reprint of Law's powerful

Answer to Dr. Trapp's Sermon on being Righteous overmuch; a *Roman Catechism*, in which he showed the unscriptural character of Romanism; and the first volume of *The Christian Library*, containing the principal works of the Apostolical Fathers, whom Wesley regarded as all but inspired, or at any rate as standing on a higher level than any other writers outside the Sacred Canon. The year 1750 produced only a few school-books, including the Colloquies of Erasmus, Phædrus, and a Compendium of Logic, taken from Aldrich and Sanderson; and the *First Letter to the Author of The Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared* (Bishop Lavington). In 1751 we have only a pamphlet, *Thoughts on Infant Baptism;* and a Hebrew, a Greek, and a French Grammar, all quite short. In 1752 appeared his first anti-Calvinistic production, *Predestination calmly considered*, and his *Second Letter to Bishop Lavington.* The year 1753 is the date of his *Complete English Dictionary;* and 1754 is a blank. John Wesley was now, for the first time in his wonderfully healthy life, seriously ill; but he was very busy during his convalescence; and in 1755 appeared the most important work he ever produced—his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament.* They are chiefly founded on Matthew Henry and Bengel, whose *Gnomon* had lately appeared and had interested him deeply. The notes are short, but his own remarks are very pungent and pithy, and his selections good. This work, besides its intrinsic value, has an interest as being one of the doctrinal standards of Methodism. In this year the fifty volumes of *The Christian Library* were completed. This was the year of the great earthquake at Lisbon, and "being much importuned thereto," writes John Wesley, "I wrote

Serious Thoughts on the Earthquake at Lisbon, directed, not as I designed at first, to the small vulgar, but the great; to the learned, rich, and honourable Heathens, commonly called Christians." In 1756 he republished his father's treatise on Baptism, and wrote his *Letter to Mr. Law* on Jacob Behmen, and an *Address to the Clergy*, in which, among other things, he urged them not to despise "human learning." The year 1757 produced only one work, but that a very able one, *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, in answer to a well-known Socinian, Taylor of Norwich. The year 1758 was a time of great unsettlement about the relations of the United Societies to the Church; so we have a Tract, *Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England against all Dissenters*, and *A Preservative against unsettled notions in Religion*, which consists of selections, partly from his own works, and partly from those of others, including Charles Leslie's *Short Method with the Deists*. The *Preservative* was specially intended for his preachers who were drifting away from the Church. Then we have a blank for two years; but it should be mentioned that in 1760 was completed his first series of fifty-three *Sermons* in four volumes (1746-1760), which have a value above the rest, because they are, with the *Notes on the New Testament*, the doctrinal standard of the Methodists. In 1762 appeared a *Letter to Mr. Horne*, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, occasioned by his sermon at Oxford in which he reflected upon the Methodists. This letter is couched in very respectful terms, for John Wesley always respected an able and sincere man, as Horne undoubtedly was. Some Tracts on Imputed Righteousness, against the Calvinists, belong to this year. In 1763 he published a *Letter to the Bishop*

of Gloucester (Dr. Warburton) against his "Doctrine of Grace." The unusual bitterness of this *Letter* may find some apology in the far greater bitterness of his opponent. He also in this year struck out quite a new line in *A Summary of the Wisdom of God in Creation—a Compendium of Natural Philosophy.* In 1764 appeared *A Short History of Methodism,* in which, after having shown how others connected with the revival had drifted from the Church, he says, "Those who remain with Mr. Wesley are mostly Church of England men; they love her articles, her homilies, her liturgy, her discipline, and unwillingly vary from it in any instance." In 1765 we have a very curious production, *Thoughts on a Single Life,* in which Wesley the married man strongly asserts the same opinions which Wesley the bachelor had asserted in favour of celibacy. The year 1767 produced *A Word to a Smuggler,* a tract which Wesley desired, like several others of his tracts, to be distributed gratuitously; and two reprints, *Christian Letters of Joseph Alleine,* and *Extracts from the Letters of Mr. Samuel Rutherford.* In 1768 the country was agitated by the "Wilkes and Liberty" contest, so we have a tract, *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs,* of course on the Conservative side. The year 1770 produced an *Extract from Young's Night Thoughts,* and two or three pamphlets on the Calvinistic controversy; 1772, *Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's Review of all the Doctrines taught by Mr. John Wesley,* an effusion which he was almost forced in self-defence to notice; and *Thoughts on Liberty,* on the Wilkes question, in which he plainly intimated his opinion that his countrymen had quite as much liberty as was good for them, especially religious liberty. "In the name of wonder, what religious liberty can you desire or even conceive,

which you have not already? Where is there a nation in Europe, in the habitable world, which enjoys such liberty of conscience as the English? Let us be thankful for it to God and the King." In 1773 we have *Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's Farrago double distilled*, a publication again forced on him by necessity; and *A short Roman History* drawn from popular sources. In 1774 came *Thoughts upon Necessity*, a product of the Calvinistic controversy. On Jan. 1st, 1776, appeared the first number of *The Arminian Magazine*, and henceforth the indefatigable old man had a fresh burden laid upon him in writing for, and editing, with the very inadequate aid of Thomas Olivers as sub-editor, this new literary organ. In this year also he printed an *Extract from the Life of Madam Guion*, a life singularly unlike his own, the only point in common being the intense piety of both; and *A Seasonable Address occasioned by our unhappy Contest with our American brethren*, in which, as a staunch "Church and King" man, he was all against the Americans. In 1780 he edited *The History of Henry Morland, or, The Fool of Quality, by Henry Brooke*, to the dismay of some of his followers, who shared the prejudice of the religious world of that day against all works of fiction. In 1781 he published *A Concise Ecclesiastical History*, which is, in fact, an abridgment of Mosheim. In 1786 appeared *The Life of Fletcher*, who only died in 1785; and in 1788 the second series of *Sermons*, which consisted of those which he had prepared for his Magazine in four volumes. In the same year he edited five volumes of *Poems* by Charles Wesley, who had just died, and alas! in the same year appeared also the *Revised Psalter and Prayer-book for America*, the publication of which all good Churchmen must

deeply deplore. All this time he was writing, and continually publishing, extracts from his Journal from Oct. 14th, 1735, when he embarked on board the *Simmonds* for Georgia, to Oct 24th, 1790, though the last four years were not revised by himself.

At the risk of wearying the reader's patience, it has been thought necessary to give this long, and, it is to be feared, tedious, list; otherwise it would be difficult to realize the wonderful energy, mental as well as bodily, of John Wesley. Even as it is, this does not pretend to be a complete list of his publications; but it is sufficient for the point aimed at.

As to John Wesley's style of writing it cannot be better described than in his own words—"What is it that constitutes a good style? Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness joined together. . . . As for me, I never think of my style at all, but just set down the words that come first. . . . Clearness, in particular, is necessary for you and me, because we are to instruct people of the lowest understanding. We should constantly use the most common, little, easy words (so they are pure and proper) which our language affords. When I had been a member of the University about ten years, I wrote and talked much as you do now. But when I talked to plain people in the castle or the town I observed they gaped and stared. This quickly obliged me to alter my style, and adopt the language of those I spoke to. And yet there is a dignity in this simplicity, which is not disagreeable to those of the highest rank."[1]

[1] Quoted in Tyerman, ii. 183.

CHAPTER XII.

PERSONAL TRAITS.

UNLIKE most reformers, John Wesley's private was not so entirely swallowed up in his public life that the former is of comparatively little interest and importance. On the contrary, his marked personality so tinged the whole of his public work that it furnishes a clue which enables us to unravel many of the complications and apparent inconsistencies which would otherwise puzzle us in estimating that work.

The first feature which strikes us in Wesley's personality, is his strong family affection. He carried Epworth about with him to the end of his life. "My father," "my brother," and above all "my mother," are constantly referred to, not only in his Journals, but also in his sermons and other public utterances. In the midst of one of his addresses he suddenly remembers that the day was the anniversary of his father's death, and proceeds at once to give a full account of the death-bed scene. He frequently refers to the way in which his mother trained her children. He publishes in his Magazine the account of the fire at Epworth Rectory, and the unexplained mystery of the Epworth ghost. He reprints more than one of his father's works. He

revisits Epworth, ever with an increased delight. He takes his widowed mother with him to his humble home, is influenced by her in one at least of the most important crises of his work, witnesses her happy departure in 1742, and preaches over her grave in Bunhill Fields. No differences of opinion can in the least degree affect his love of his brothers, both Samuel and Charles, nor yet of his sisters, alienated though most of them were from him by their unhappy marriages. In short, it is impossible to understand John Wesley's character aright without taking into full account his family ties. These, for example, clearly laid the foundation of one of his most marked characteristics throughout life; his intense realization of a particular Providence in the minutest affairs of daily life. It is idle to deny that this frequently led him into a readiness to accept as marvellous and supernatural what might easily have been explained by natural causes, and into practices which can only be described as superstitious. The whole Wesley family, with the exception of Samuel, seems to have believed in the Epworth ghost. When the father alone was undisturbed by it, the rest were afraid that it portended some evil to him, according to a superstitious notion of the time. When, to their great relief, the Rector was also haunted by the visitor, his first idea was that his eldest son was the victim of fate—"If thou be the spirit of my son Sammy, knock three times and no more." In 1769, John Wesley writes to Lady Maxwell —"I have heard my mother say, 'I have frequently been as fully assured that my father's spirit was with me, as if I had seen him with my eyes;' but she did not explain herself farther." Assuredly, John Wesley's

credulity, as well as his piety, was hereditary; and the two are so blended together that it is difficult to disentangle them. His piety made him resolve to be *homo unius libri;* but his credulity led him to use that one book in a way in which it was never intended to be used. He was more than once led astray by having recourse to the objectionable practice of the *Sortes Biblicæ.* His piety led him to believe in the direct interposition of Divine Providence in human affairs; but his credulity prevented him from remembering that second causes frequently intervene. This is his remark upon the case of a poor woman who was attacked with fits—"The plain case is, she is tormented by an evil spirit; yea, try all your drugs over and over, but at length it will plainly appear, 'This kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting.'" He deeply regretted the dying out of the belief in witchcraft. "The English in general," he says, "and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions. I am sorry for it; and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against the violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those that do not believe it."[1] When he had a narrow escape for his life in a carriage accident, he remarks—"I am persuaded both evil and good angels had a large share in this transaction."[2] He quite believed that the elements were controlled for the convenience of his work—"Just as I began to preach, the sun broke out, and shone exceedingly hot on the side of my head. I found, if I continued, I should not be able to speak long, and lifted

[1] *Journal*, May 25th, 1768. [2] *Journal*, June 1774.

up my heart to God. In a minute or two it was covered with clouds, which continued till the service was over. Let any who please call this chance; I call it an answer to prayer." [1] "The wind kept off the rain while I was preaching. As soon as I ended, it began." [2] "Just as I began preaching the rain began; but it stopped in two or three minutes, I am persuaded, in answer to the prayer of faith; incidents of the same kind I have seen abundance of times; and they are nothing strange to those who sincerely believe: 'the very hairs of your head are all numbered.'" [3] Old-world superstitions found a ready believer in John Wesley—"About two in the morning a dog began howling under our window in a most uncommon manner. We could not stop him by any means. Just then, William B—r died." [4]

Another personal characteristic near akin to that above-mentioned, was his extreme guilelessness, his readiness to believe the best of everybody, his utterly unsuspicious nature. This weakness—for it amounted to a weakness—showed itself most glaringly in his relations to the other sex. We have seen one instance in Georgia; but unfortunately Wesley did not profit by his dearly-bought experience there. Caution was not a conspicuous feature in any phase of his life; but least of all was it so in regard to the delicate questions of love and marriage. It would have been well for him if his first love passage had been his last. Ten years before the Hopkey episode, he had been smitten with the charms of a sister of Robert Kirkham, one of the Oxford Methodists, who was himself most anxious

[1] *Journal*, April 24, 1755.
[2] *Ibid.* June 2, 1758.
[3] *Ibid.* June 8, 1763.
[4] *Ibid.* Oct. 26, 1786.

that his spiritual adviser should become his brother-in-law. And so far as one can judge, Betty Kirkham would have suited him; she was in the same social position, and was evidently struck with him; but the matter proceeded no further than a little philandering, carried on after the curiously stilted manner of the day, the prosaic Betty being transformed into the romantic "Varenese." Grace Murray succeeded Sophia Hopkey; and, without saying a word against her in any way, we may still admit that she was in no way fitted to be the wife of John Wesley. She accompanied him in his travels, both in Ireland and in the northern counties of England; and when he was taken ill at Newcastle in 1749, she tended him as a nurse. Times of convalescence are *mollia tempora fandi*, and the natural result followed. Wesley made her an offer of marriage, which was accepted with as much surprise as pleasure. "This is too great a blessing for me; I can't tell how to believe it. This is all I could have wished under heaven." But, like Miss Hopkey, Mrs. Murray had a second string to her bow, and by the prompt interference of Charles Wesley, who had no idea of having a ci-devant servant-maid for his sister-in-law, the marriage was prevented in the most effectual way, by her union with her other suitor, John Bennett.

Unfortunately in his next venture John Wesley was only too successful. What were the attractions of the widow Vazeille it is quite impossible to say; but, whatever they were, they were sufficient to lead him to make her an offer, which was accepted. Charles was too late to prevent it. "My brother," he says, "told me he was *resolved to marry*. I was thunderstruck. Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me the person was Mrs.

Vazeille, one of whom I had never had the least suspicion. I refused his company to the chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally."

Perhaps under no circumstances could the marriage have turned out happily. Wesley's wandering life was in itself an obstacle; he was wedded to his work; and no one who could not throw herself heart and soul into that work could expect to lead a comfortable life with him. Neither could any one who was of a jealous and suspicious nature; for Wesley had a host of female friends with whom he conversed and corresponded in the frankest possible manner. Mrs. Wesley had both these disqualifications; and when she was provoked, she was a perfect virago, and it must be owned that Wesley gave her provocation. To place such a woman as Sarah Ryan, who had three husbands living, and lived with none of them, in the confidential position of housekeeper at Kingswood School; to correspond with her, and make her the confidante of his marital troubles; to write religious letters to other members of his Society, of whom his wife was jealous, was, to use the mildest term, injudicious to the last degree. Wesley meant no harm; he loved his wife in spite of their disagreements, as many letters written to her after his marriage prove. Charles, who was by no means inclined to regard too favourably John's conduct in the matter, yet owns that "nothing could exceed his brother's patience in bearing with his perverse and peevish wife." That patience was at last exhausted, and he exploded thus,—"Know me, and know yourself; suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more; do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money, or praise; be content to be a private, insignificant person, known and loved by

God and me. Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty, which I claim by the laws of God and man; leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience; then shall I govern you with gentle sway, even as Christ the Church. . . . Of what importance is your character to mankind? If you was buried just now, or if you had never lived, what loss would it be to the cause of God?" This is not exactly pouring oil upon the troubled waters; and we are not surprised to learn that matters did not go on more smoothly. It is, however, a mistake to suppose that the ill-assorted pair parted finally, a mistake arising, no doubt, from Wesley's own words—"Jan. 23, 1771. For what cause I know not, my wife set out for Newcastle, purposing 'never to return.' *Non eam reliqui; non dimisi; non revocabo.*" She returned, however, without being recalled.

It is a relief to turn from this painful episode, which a faithful biographer was bound to notice, to more pleasing phases of John Wesley's personal history. The reader has already learned from Wesley's own words how he managed to secure a considerable amount of time at his own disposal. This time he employed, not only in writing, but in an extensive and somewhat desultory course of reading. Unlike his quondam mentor, William Law, he by no means despised "human learning"; and he felt it a pleasure as well as a duty to keep himself in touch with the current literature of the day. In his early wanderings he used to read as he rode on horseback; and when, by his friends' advice, he exchanged that mode of travelling for a carriage, he had a book-shelf fitted up in the conveyance.

His Journals are full of shrewd, though sometimes rather eccentric, comments on the books which he read.

The eccentricity seems to me to have arisen from the fact that he did not judge books by a purely intellectual standard, but very much according to whether they tended to edification or not. For instance, a very inferior mind would surely have been able to perceive the intellectual superiority of Swift to Byrom, and of Hume to Beattie. But Wesley deliberately asserts, after having read John Byrom's poems, that "he has all the wit and humour of Dr. Swift, together with much more learning, a deep and strong understanding, and, above all, a serious vein of piety." Byrom is delightful; but to compare him intellectually with the great Dean is absurd; there was, however, undoubtedly, "a serious vein of piety" in the one which is not conspicuous in the other; hence, perhaps, the amazing dictum. Wesley, again, agreed with his royal master, whom he venerated in the highest degree, that Beattie had entirely demolished Hume; in which judgment he must again surely have allowed his piety to overrule his intellect. He read "Mr. Jones' (of Nayland) ingenious essay on the Principles of Natural Philosophy," and remarks that, "he seems to have entirely overthrown the Newtonian principles," a remark with which the world at large will scarcely agree with him, though, by the way, the writings of Jones of Nayland deserve to be far better known than they are. He saw no merit whatever in Sterne, whose writings were at the time (1772) creating a great sensation. "I casually took up a volume of what is called *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy. Sentimental!* What is that? It is not English; he might as well have said *continental*. It is not sense." We can well understand that Sterne would be far from being a clergyman after John Wesley's heart, whose

religious sense would revolt from the loose, not to say, prurient, tone of the popular writer. But the orthodox divines of his own Church, Wesley greatly and most justly admired. He praises highly the writings of Dean Prideaux (*Journal*, Nov. 1767); he reads with delight "that fine book, *Bishop Butler's Analogy;*" he thinks Dr. Horne's *Commentary on the Psalms* "the best that ever was wrote," though on some points he does not agree with him (*Journal*, March 27, 1783). "Dr. Blair" (the Presbyterian), he says, "is quite too elegant for me; give me plain, strong Dr. Horne." He reads Bishop Lowth's Lectures *De Poesi Hebraicâ*, and thinks them "far more satisfactory than anything on that subject which he had ever seen before." "Lighting on a volume of Mr. Seed's sermons," he says, "I was utterly surprised. Where did this man lie hid, that I never heard of him all the time I was at Oxford?" (*Journal*, May 23, 1765.) Jeremiah Seed, however, ranked high among the noted preachers of the day. Alexander Knox, who must have known, tells us that Wesley was an admirer of the English Platonists, and that "the attachment he conceived to Taylor, Smith, Cudworth, Worthington, and Lucas," all of whom except the last belonged to the Platonic School, "retained all its cordiality to the last hour of his life;" but I can find few traces of the influence of those divines in Wesley's own writings With a curious eclecticism, however, he certainly read and admired some of the great Puritan divines.

John Wesley was very particular about the minor details of life; he was scrupulously neat and correct in his dress; generally appearing in full canonicals, a habit which in his time was fast dying out. "His cassock, black silk stockings, and large silver buckles,"

which are familiar to us all through the portraits, were specially noticed by an eye-witness.[1] The custom of wearing his hair long, which he had formed in his early Oxford days, that he might save the money for the poor—it should be noted that the dressing of the natural hair or the arrangement of wigs was a much more elaborate and expensive operation than it is now—he retained to his old age; and when the raven locks were changed to silvery white, his venerable appearance must have been very striking. His habits were as regular as clockwork. For more than fifty years he rose at four a.m., and he seems to have regarded this early rising as quite a religious duty. He speaks of the laxity in some of the Societies about the daily morning preaching (at five a.m.!) in terms which would be appropriate to moral laxity; and when it was pleaded "the people will not come—at least, not in the winter"—he remarks, "If so, the Methodists are a fallen people. . . . If they will not attend now, they have lost their zeal; and then it cannot be denied they are a fallen people. . . . Let all the preachers that are still alive to God join together as one man; fast, and pray, lift up their voice as a trumpet; be instant, in season, out of season, to convince them they are fallen; and exhort them instantly to repent and do their first works; this in particular—rising in the morning, without which neither their souls nor bodies can long remain in health."[2]

As one might infer from the raciness of his writings, he was a pleasant companion. "Mr. Wesley had," writes Dr. Whitehead, who knew him intimately, "most

[1] See Tyerman, ii. 409. [2] *Journal*, April 4, 1784.

exquisite talents to make himself agreeable in company, and having been much accustomed to society the rules of good-breeding were habitual to him."[1] And here it may be observed that though John Wesley had, as we have seen, an almost ludicrous abhorrence of a "genteel congregation," and is never tired of girding at their shallowness, their inattention and evil behaviour generally, yet he was by no means insensible to the compliment of proper attention when paid by the upper classes, but always repaid it with the courtesy of a well-bred gentleman. It was hardly to be expected that a scion of the Wellesleys and the Annesleys could regard himself as an inferior being even to "a member of the noble house of Shirley"; and John Wesley felt it to be part of his mission to counterbalance some of the painful adulation by which Lady Huntingdon was being rather spoilt by some of her humble followers. But when the good countess recommended him to Lady Buchan as chaplain, he wrote her a courteous letter of thanks, and showed his gratitude to Lady Buchan by preaching before her a faithful sermon on her duty as a rich lady.[2] He records with evident satisfaction the attention and hospitality shown to him by more than one Bishop. Dr. Johnson delighted in his conversation, and only complained that Wesley had not leisure to give him as much of it as he desired. Wesley, by the way, never joined in the contemptuous pity which some had the impertinence to express for the Doctor's religion, but always spoke of

[1] *Life of John Wesley, some time Fellow of Lincoln College*, by John Whitehead, M.D., author of the *Discourse delivered at Mr. Wesley's Funeral*, p. 468.

[2] See *The Faithful Steward*.

him and his writings with the respect that was their due. His last entry is touching—"Feb. 18th, 1784. I spent two hours with that great man, Dr. Johnson, who is sinking into the grave by a gentle decay." There were in fact several points of resemblance between the two men. Both combined a most loyal allegiance to the reigning family with a sort of sentimental regard for the ancient race. (This of course is obvious in Dr. Johnson; it is not so obvious in John Wesley; but the attentive observer will find traces of the feeling. He regarded his father's troubles as a judgment upon him for his treatment of Mrs. Wesley in her refusal to say Amen to the prayers for the new Royal Family; he was a strong upholder of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots; he was a great admirer of John Byrom, who, to say the least, was a hankerer after the Stuarts, and certainly agreed with several of the Nonjurors on many points.) Both were bluff, downright Englishmen who spoke out just what they thought, and came to the point at once; both had a way of addressing their friends in a most unceremonious way, and telling them home-truths with an abruptness which, but for their real kindness of heart and genuine sincerity, would have been rather offensive. The "Bozzys" and "Goldys" and "Lankys" of Johnson found their counterparts in the "Tommys" and "Jemmys" and "Sammys" of Wesley. Here is a specimen of the way in which Wesley used to address his friends, which reminds us, *mutatis mutandis*, of the way in which Johnson used to address Boswell. "Dear Jemmy,—Unto you it was given to suffer a little of what you extremely wanted—obloquy and evil report. But you did not acknowledge either the gift or the Giver. You saw only Thomas Olivers, not God.

O Jemmy, you do not know yourself. You cannot bear to be continually steeped in the esteem and praise of men. Therefore I tremble at your stay at Dublin; it is the most dangerous place for *you* under heaven."[1]

The extreme openness of John Wesley's character showed itself in his habits. It would have been dangerous for any one to have written to him a private and confidential letter. "He never," writes Dr. Whitehead, "travelled alone; and the person who attended him had the charge of his letters and papers, which, of course, lay open to his inspection. The preachers, likewise, who were occasionally with him, had access to his letters and papers, especially if he had confidence in their sincerity and zeal in religion, which it was not very difficult to obtain. It was easy for these persons to see the motive that influenced him, and the end he had in view in every action of his life, however remote from public observation; and he took no pains to conceal them, but seemed rather to court the discovery."[2] In fact, he could conceal nothing; whatever he felt at the moment came straight out—sometimes in a rather embarrassing way. One of his travelling preachers went over to the Friends in 1777, a course of which John Wesley would vehemently disapprove. In his indignation he let out circumstances which should not have been disclosed. The preacher seems to have told his grievance to Charles Wesley, who replied, "You expect he will keep his own secrets. Let me whisper it in your ears; he never could do it since he was born. It is a gift which God has not given him.

[1] Quoted by Tyerman, iii. 24.

[2] Whitehead, ii. 370.

But I shall speak to him, and put a stop to what you justly complain of. I wish you may never have an uneasy thought on our account. Speak not, therefore, of my brother; think no evil of him; forget him if you can entirely, till you meet above." Being perfectly open himself, he believed everybody to be the same, and was thus, no doubt, often imposed on. "My brother," said Charles, "was, I believe, born for the benefit of knaves."

About money, or the luxuries which money brings, John Wesley cared literally nothing. His writings became a very valuable property; for with an amusing *naïveté*, he recommended or rather insisted upon his people buying and reading the books he wrote or edited; and of course they obeyed him in this as in everything else. The sale, therefore, was naturally very large; but Wesley himself received no pecuniary profit whatever from it. In several notices of bishops' palaces and grounds that he visited, which occur in his *Journal*, there is not a hint that he envied them, or contrasted his own poor lot with theirs. His orderly habits prevented him from running into debt; but when his modest, personal wants were supplied, he was all but penniless, and was quite content to be so.

Other circumstances in his personal history will appear in the account of his last years, which is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

OLD AGE AND DEATH.

THE last six years of John Wesley's life form an epoch of their own, and require separate treatment. In ordinary cases it would be rather late to date the commencement of a man's old age from his eighty-second year; but in this case, we rather owe him an apology for venturing to call him an old man so soon. He was still a youth, both in mind and body. In making his usual entry on his birthday, he writes—"June 28, 1784. To-day I entered on my eighty-second year, as fit for any exercise of body or mind as I was forty years ago. I am as strong at eighty-one as I was at twenty-one; but abundantly more healthy, being a stranger to the headache and other bodily disorders which attended me in my youth." Even two years later he declares—"June 28, 1786. I am a wonder to myself. It is now twelve years since I have felt such a sensation as weariness. I am never tired either with writing, preaching, or travelling." It is not till he is turned eighty-five that he begins to feel that he is getting on in years; and then the only symptoms are that he is "not quite so agile as he was in times past, and that his sight is a little decayed." He will only allow one cause to explain this marvellous vitality—"The good pleasure of God, who doeth whatsoever pleaseth Him." But he specifies three "chief means.

1. My constantly rising at four for about fifty years. 2. My generally preaching at five in the morning; one of the most healthy exercises in the world. 3. My never travelling less, by sea or land, than 4500 miles in a year." It is not then because of his age, but because his work entered upon a new phase, that the last stage of his life may be dated from 1784. Dr. Whitehead calls this year "the grand climacterical year of Methodism," on account of two changes which now took place in the form of its original constitution, and "laid the foundation of a *new* order of things among the Methodists, hitherto unknown."[1] These changes were—1. The Deed of Declaration. 2. The Ordinations.

The first need not detain us long. Even John Wesley could not live for ever; and what was to become of the Societies after he was gone? "During the time Wesley governed the Societies, his power was *absolute*. There were no rights or privileges; no offices of power or influence, but what were created and sanctioned by him; nor could any persons hold them but during his pleasure."[2] It was obviously necessary to provide for a contingency, which in the course of nature could not be very remote. So John Wesley executed and enrolled in Chancery a Deed Poll, which "substituted for the Founder a permanent body of a hundred, who, meeting annually as 'the Conference,' fill the place which Wesley filled during his life-time."[3] This "Legal Hundred," "being preachers and expounders of God's Holy Word, under the care of, and in connection with, John Wesley," were to be the supreme governing body, vacancies being filled up by co-optation.

[1] *Life of Wesley*, ii. 404. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 474.
[3] Mr. Denny Urlin's *John Wesley's Place in Church History*, p. 125.

The deed was simply "to explain the words 'Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists,' and to declare what persons are members of the said Conference, and how the succession and identity thereof is to be continued."[1] It need only be added that the choice of the first "Legal Hundred" rested entirely with John Wesley, and that out of the 191 preachers in full connection, he made a selection which was thought by some rather arbitrary, and which hurt the feelings of some who were excluded; but in this, as in everything else, there was no appeal against John Wesley's decision.[2]

The other events which make 1784 an epoch in John Wesley's life, will require much longer notice. Hitherto, there really had been nothing in his proceedings which can fairly be called a violation of Church principles. The utmost that can be said is, that he had not paid the obedience which was due to his ecclesiastical superiors, in matters in which no real principle was involved; and, considering the urgent need there was of a revival of the dormant energies of the Church; considering that the great majority of the multitudes who were aroused by him to a consciousness of their spiritual wants were practically, as he said, no more members of the Church of England than they were of the Church of Muscovy; considering that the rulers of the Church themselves complained, with a mournful unanimity, of the little influence for good that religion then exercised; considering that Wesley's strict obedience to the requirements of the Church authorities would simply have cut him off altogether from doing the work which he felt himself called to do, we may well be slow to condemn him for irregularities which were concerned

[1] See Tyerman, iii. 418.
[2] See Southey's *Life of Wesley*, ii. 342-344.

with matters of detail, not with matters of principle. The parochial system may be an excellent arrangement for ordinary times; but it is, at best, only of the *bene esse*, not of the *esse* of the Church; and it had completely broken down as an adequate religious agency in the early part of the Georgian era.

John Wesley was perfectly right in contending that not one part of his complicated machinery for a religious revival was in any way inconsistent with his position as a good Churchman. On the contrary, without any overstraining, he found a precedent for almost every one of the methods he adopted in the earliest and purest ages of the Church. The formation of Societies, with all their arrangements of class-meetings, and so forth, the employment of lay-preachers, the adoption of field-preaching—all this was perfectly consistent with the soundest Churchmanship. Wesley had steadily refused, though much pressure had been put upon him, to sanction anything which would have really compromised him as a clergyman; he never called his Society *a* Church or *the* Church; he absolutely forbade his preachers to usurp any priestly functions; he would have no meetings to interfere with the Church hours.

But now, in 1784, he took a step, or rather commenced a series of steps, which, if they really were what they have generally been represented as being (which is doubtful), come under a very different category. But we must begin at the beginning, and for that purpose have to go back nearly forty years. "Jan. 20th, 1746," he writes—"On the road to Bristol I read over Lord King's account of the Primitive Church. In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught; but if so, it would follow that bishops and presbyters

are (essentially) of one order; and that originally every Christian congregation was a Church independent of all others." Accordingly, in his *Notes on the New Testament*, a few years later, he says doubtfully—"Perhaps elders and bishops were the same, or no otherwise different than are the rector of a parish and his curates." "The names of bishop and presbyter or elder were promiscuously used in the first ages." In 1756 he writes—"I still believe the episcopal form of Church government to be scriptural and apostolical—I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the Apostles. But that it is *prescribed* in Scripture I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicon*." One turns with some curiosity to the two books which exercised so powerful an influence over John Wesley's mind; and one finds that both of them were written by mere boys. Peter King (afterwards Lord Chancellor) was only twenty-one when he wrote his treatise on *The Primitive Church*;[1]

[1] The full title is, *An Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church that flourished within the first* 300 *years after Christ. Faithfully collected out of the Extant Writings of these Ages. By an Impartial Hand*, 1691. The writer justifies his title. From his own point of view he certainly *does* write with "an impartial hand"; and, as a matter of fact, his "enquiry" led him to become a Churchman instead of a Dissenter. Curiously enough, he condemns by anticipation John Wesley's own conduct in the strongest possible terms: "When," he writes, "Churches had been regularly formed under the jurisdiction of their proper Bishops, it had been unaccountable impudence and a most detestable act of schism, for any one, though never so legally ordained, to have entered those parishes, and then to have performed ecclesiastical administrations, without the permission, or, which is all one, in defiance to the Bishops or Ministers thereof." ("Enquiry," p. 57.) When Wesley read these words, did he remember his interview with Bishop Butler, and his arguments with the many clergy whose parishes he invaded?

Stillingfleet only twenty-four when he wrote his *Irenicon*. It seems a strange thing that a well-read, thoughtful man of mature age like John Wesley should have attached so much weight to the opinions of two youths, who, when they grew older and wiser, virtually recanted what they had written. However, we must take John Wesley as we find him; and the fact is undeniable that the dicta of these two young gentlemen made a deep impression upon his mind; they acted upon it like leaven, and the results at last appeared in the events which have now to be recorded.

It has been seen that properly ordained clergymen had been the very backbone of the Wesley movement; and John Wesley sincerely desired to strengthen the clerical element in it. But the body of the clergy held aloof, or were openly hostile; and the Bishops, though many of them were personally kind to the Wesleys, did not encourage his work; among the numerous Bishops' charges, from 1740 to the end of the century, which are still extant, there are few in which some blow is not aimed at the Methodists. In default of English Bishops, John Wesley had, in 1764, enlisted the services of a rather shadowy Greek Prelate, Erasmus Bishop of Arcadia, to ordain some of his lay-preachers. There seems to be no reason to doubt that Erasmus was a genuine Bishop; but Charles Wesley disapproved of the proceeding, and would never allow preachers ordained by the Bishop of Arcadia to assist him at the Holy Communion. We have seen also how John Wesley made futile overtures to the evangelical clergy. Matters did not improve with years, and John Wesley was, to use a homely phrase, at his wits' end to know how to gain clerical assistance. We can well understand, therefore, how he would welcome Dr. Coke as

an invaluable accession, not only as a most energetic, earnest worker, but as a genuine clergyman, about whose Orders there could be no mistake; and how he would be ready to stretch a point to meet his views. But surely Mr. Southey has made a mistake when he says that John Wesley "*summoned* Dr. Coke to Bristol, and Mr. Creighton, a clergyman, who had become Methodist; and with their assistance ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey presbyters, for America; and afterwards Dr. Coke[1] as superintendent." The initiative was clearly taken by Dr. Coke himself, as his own letter proves. In 1784 he wrote to Wesley—"The more maturely I consider the matter, the more expedient it appears to me that the power of ordaining others should be received by me from you, by imposition of your hands; and that you should lay hands on brother Whatcoat and brother Vasey. You can do all this in Mr. C——n's house, in your chamber; and afterwards (according to Mr. Fletcher's advice) give us letters testimonial of the different offices with which you have been pleased to invest us. For the purpose of laying hands on brothers Whatcoat and Vasey, I can bring down Mr. Creighton with me, by which you will have two presbyters with you. In respect to brother Rankin's argument that you will escape a great deal of odium by omitting this, it is nothing. Either it will be known, or not known. If not known, then no odium will arise; but if known, you will be obliged to acknowledge that I acted under your direction, or suffer me to sink under the weight of my enemies, with perhaps your brother at the head of them. I shall entreat you to ponder these things."

[1] *Life of Wesley*, ii. 299.

John Wesley's action upon this, and his reasons for it, had better be told in his own words. "The case," he said, "is widely different between England and North America. Here there are Bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish minister; so that for some hundreds of miles together there is none either to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here therefore my scruples are at an end; and I consider myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest." And more at length—"I have appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. F. Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Rich. Whatcoat and T. Vasey, to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England (I think the best constituted National Church in the world), which I advise all travelling preachers to use on the Lord's Day, in all congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's Day. If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than I have taken. It has been indeed proposed to desire English Bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object:—(1) I desired the Bishop of London to ordain one, but could not prevail. (2) If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. (3) If they would ordain them now, they would expect to

govern them, and how grievously this would entangle us! (4) As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the State and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the Primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely set them free." In his Journal he records—"Sept. 1, 1784. Being now clear in my own mind, I took a step which I had long weighed in my mind, and appointed Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey to go and serve the desolate sheep in America." "Sept. 2.—I added to them three more; which I verily believe will be much to the glory of God."

Now let us give full weight to the undoubted fact that the Christians in America were in a desolate state —remembering, however, that the fault really lay with the English State, not the English Church, which had been incessantly pleading for many years for bishops and for more clergy for America. Let us also note that John Wesley carefully avoids using the word "ordain," or "bishop," or "priest"; let us moreover observe how he still clings to Church usages—the weekly celebration, the use of the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays, the following of the Primitive Church, &c. Yet, after all, into what a sea of difficulties and inconsistencies he launches himself as a duly ordained clergyman! If bishops and priests were of the same order, what was the object of one priest laying his hands upon a brother priest? What could Wesley confer upon Coke, which Coke might not equally well have conferred upon Wesley? Does not the whole force of the argument derived from the independence of America, turn upon the

question whether the church is a mere creature of the civil government, or a spiritual society which is not in the least affected in its essence by its connection or disconnection with the civil power? Wesley had always maintained the latter ground. He had spoken rather slightingly of "the establishment." "If, as my lady says, all outward establishments are Babel, so is this establishment. Let it stand for me. I neither set it up, nor pull it down. But let you and I build up the City of God."[1] But surely the independence of America could only affect the *establishment* of the Church, not the Church itself. Then again, Wesley, as a well-read divine, must have known that ordinations were always public. But this service was conducted in the strictest privacy. In the small hours of the morning, in his own private chamber, without the knowledge of even his brother, who was close at hand, he made Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury——what? Certainly not bishops. He repudiated the title himself, and was extremely annoyed when those whom he had "set apart as superintendents" assumed it in America. In his own plain way he wrote to Asbury—"Sept. 20, 1788. In one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the Doctor (Coke) and you differ from me. I study to be little; you study to be great. I creep; you strut along. I found a school, you a college; nay, and call it after your own names [Cokesbury = Coke, Asbury]. . . . One instance of your greatness has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never by my consent call me bishop! For my sake, for God's

[1] To his brother Charles, Jan. 28th, 1755.

sake, put a full end to all this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better. Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart."

Charles Wesley had of course something to say on the matter:—"Alas!" he wrote to his brother, "what trouble are you preparing for yourself as well as for me, and for your oldest, truest, and best friends! Before you have quite broken down the bridge, stop and consider. Go to your grave in peace, or at least suffer me to go before this ruin. So much I think you owe to my father, my brother, and to me; as to stay till I am taken from the evil. This letter is a debt to our parents and to our brother, as well as to you." John replied—"For these forty years I have been in doubt what obedience is due to 'heathenish priests and mitred infidels.' In obedience to the laws of the land I have never exercised in England the power which I believe God has given me. I firmly believe I am a scriptural *episcopos* as much as any man in England, for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable that no man can prove. But this does nowise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England, from which I have no desire to separate now more than fifty years ago. I still attend all the ordinances of the Church at all opportunities, and I earnestly advise all that are connected with me to do so," with much more to the same effect; and he adds the remarkable words—"Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better." Charles answered him point by point. After having recanted his own line "Heathenish priests,"[1] "I do not," he says, "understand what obedience to the Bishops you dread. They have let us alone, and left us

[1] See *supra*, p. 158.

to act just as we pleased, for these fifty years. At present, some of them are quite friendly to us, particularly towards you. The churches are all open to you, and never could there be less pretence for a separation. That you are a scriptural ἐπίσκοπος or overseer, I do not dispute; and so is every minister who has the cure of souls. Neither need we dispute whether the uninterrupted succession is fabulous, as you believe; or real, as I believe; or whether Lord King be right or wrong. If I could prove your separation, I would not. But do you not allow that the doctor has separated? You ask, 'What are you frighted at?' At the approaching schism, as causeless and unprovoked as the American rebellion; at your own eternal disgrace, and all those frightful evils which your own reasons describe. 'Kept closer to you!' When you took that fatal step at Bristol, I kept as close to you as close could be; for I was all the time at your elbow. You might certainly 'have done better,' if you had taken me into your counsel. I thank you for your intention of remaining my friend. Herein my heart is as your heart. Whom God hath joined, let not man put asunder. We have taken each other for better or worse, till death us do part—part? no, but unite eternally!"

Charles Wesley made no secret of his opinion about his brother's conduct. To a clergyman returning from America, he wrote—"I can scarcely yet believe it, that in his eighty-second year, my brother, my old, intimate friend and companion, should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained elders, consecrated a bishop, and sent him to ordain our lay-preachers in America. I was then in Bristol, at his elbow; yet he never gave me the least hint of his intention. How was he surprised into so rash an action? He certainly persuaded

himself that it was right. Lord Mansfield[1] told me last year that ordination was separation. This my brother does not, nor will not see, or that he has renounced the principles and practice of his whole life. I have taken him for better or worse, till death us do part; or rather reunite us in love unspeakable. But I have lived too long that have lived to see this evil day!" He takes a very different view of the future of the Americans from what John took. "What," he says, "will these poor sheep in the wilderness do? Had they had patience a little longer, they would have seen a real bishop in America, consecrated by three Scotch bishops, who have their consecration from English bishops, and are acknowledged by them as the same with themselves. There is, therefore, not the least difference betwixt the members of Bishop Seabury's Church and the Church of England. He told me he looked upon Methodists in America as sound members of the Church, and was ready to ordain any of their preachers whom he should find duly qualified. His ordinations would be indeed genuine, but what are your poor Methodists now?"

The ordinations for America were followed by some ordinations for Scotland, in regard to which John Wesley acted on the judgment of others, not on his own; for he records in his Journal—"Aug. 1, 1785. Having, with a few select friends, weighed the matter thoroughly, I yielded to their judgment, and set apart three of our well-tried preachers—John Pawson, Thomas Hanley, and Joseph Taylor—to minister in Scotland; and I trust God will bless their ministrations, and show that He has sent them." In Scotland, at any rate,

[1] Lord Mansfield had been a schoolfellow with Charles Wesley at Westminster.

there was an ancient Episcopal Church, the services of which John Wesley had always enjoyed. It was just being relieved from the disabilities which had long hampered its work. Had Wesley quite forgotten this Church which he once loved, when he argued that his action was not separation from the Church? "Not from the Church of Scotland, for we were never connected therewith; not from the Church of England, for this is not concerned in the steps which are taken in Scotland. Whatever then is done, either in America or Scotland, is not separation from the Church of England. I have no thought of this; I have many objections against it."

But finally John Wesley "set apart" three of his preachers—Mather, Rankin, and More—for the ministry without sending them out of England. Mr. Denny Urlin, who has studied the question thoroughly, is of opinion that it has never been proved that he intended them for England; and certainly his after conduct in reference to the Scotch ordinees, seems to bear out this theory. In Scotland they had assumed full canonicals, and were addressed by Wesley with the title of "Reverend." But as soon as ever they crossed the border, they sunk back again into plain "Mr.," and had to doff their canonicals. They murmured a little, but there was no appeal against Mr. Wesley's fiat.

It has been said that John Wesley's mental powers were failing when he began to "set apart" his preachers; and Charles Wesley himself has countenanced the idea by exclaiming—

> "'Twas age that made the breach, not he."

But there really appear to be no traces of mental decay in any other respects. There *are*, however, several

traces of his mind being not quite at ease about what he had done. His correspondence with his brother, already quoted, hints as much; and the testimony of Mr. Alexander Knox is unimpeachable. Knox remonstrated with him on the subject, and "from the manner," he says, "in which he heard me, and from what he said in reply, I saw clearly that he felt himself in a vortex of difficulties; and that, in the steps he had taken, the yielding to what he thought pressing exigencies, he nevertheless had done violence to undissembled and rooted feeling."

It is a curious fact that the time when his own Church had the strongest reason to complain of John Wesley's proceedings was the very time when almost all opposition to him on the part of Churchmen had died away. During the last six years of his life he was universally treated with the utmost reverence. He was no more suspected of being a Jacobite, a Papist, or—worst of all—an enthusiast. He himself was utterly amazed at the change. "I am become," he writes in 1785, "I know not how, an honourable man. The scandal of the cross is ceased; and all the kingdom, rich and poor, Papists and Protestants, behave with courtesy; nay, with seeming good will." This was written respecting Ireland, but it was just the same in England. He had more invitations to preach in churches than he could possibly accept; and the last pages of his Journal are full of notices of churches in which he officiated. The very last entry of all is this—"Oct. 24, 1790. I explained, to a numerous congregation in Spitalfields church, 'the whole armour of God.' St. Paul's, Shadwell, was still more crowded in the afternoon, while I enforced that important truth—'one thing is needful'; and I hope many, even then, resolved to choose that better

part." The pure motives of the good old man were now recognized on all sides; he was treated with affectionate regard wherever he went; and among his own people his authority was, if possible, greater than ever. "What an astonishing degree of power," writes Mr. Pawson, "does our aged father and friend exercise! However, I am satisfied, and have nothing but love in my heart towards the good old man."

This change of treatment may have been in part due to a change in Wesley himself. Some of his angularities were rubbed off by age and experience. With his usual frankness, he owns, in so many words, that he had modified his opinions on several points. He had always been in advance of his age in recognizing real good wherever it might be found; and this large-heartedness certainly increased with his increasing years. His interests were widened, and his sympathies both widened and deepened in his old age. "As Wesley grew older," writes Mr. Tyerman, "he took far more interest in visiting scenes of beauty and historic buildings than in earlier life" (iii. 475). Pious Romans Catholics and even virtuous heathen became objects of his admiration; and, in spite of his late inconsistent conduct, there can be no doubt that his attachment to the Church of his Baptism was stronger than ever in his last years.

He outlived all the friends of his youth and middle age, but he kept himself wonderfully in touch with the life of the day, and never sank into a mere obsolete relic of the past. George Whitefield, Thomas Walsh, John Fletcher, and Charles Wesley were all younger men than himself, and all passed away before him; but he had the enviable faculty, so rare in old men, of attaching himself to new friends. He was more than sixty when he made the acquaintance of two of the

warmest friends of his later life, Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Alexander Knox; and more than seventy when he took Dr. Coke and Dr. Adam Clarke to his heart. One of the most interesting links between the generation that was passing away and the generation that was coming on, is found in the notices in his Journal of Mr. Simeon—"Dec. 20, 1784. I went to Hinxworth, where I had the satisfaction of meeting Mr. Simeon, of King's College. He has spent some time with Mr. Fletcher at Madeley; two kindred souls, much resembling each other both in fervour and spirit and in the earnestness of their address." "Oct. 29, 1787, Hinxworth. Mr. Simeon from Cambridge met me; who breathes the very spirit of Mr. Fletcher." Mr. Fletcher, more than any man he ever met, realized John Wesley's ideal of Christian Perfection. It is not often that an old man can see in the coming race a reproduction of the hero of his prime. But John Wesley always seems to have acted on the principle,

> Uno avulso, non deficit alter
> Aureus.

Even when his brother Charles was taken to his rest in 1788, John Wesley did not break down—except on one occasion, when he speedily recovered himself—but showed his regard for the beloved memory in a more practical way by treating the widow and children with the greatest liberality and kindness. He threw himself also with all the ardour of youth into the new schemes for good which were being formed when his own day was nearly over. He records more than once with great delight how the new institution of Sunday Schools seemed to be spreading throughout the land; and his very last letter was, as we have seen, a letter of encouragement to William Wilberforce on his crusade

against the slave-trade. He was also quick-sighted enough to perceive the danger which arose from the increasing worldliness of his more opulent followers, and some of his latest utterances were vigorous denunciations of this tendency. "Why," he asks in 1789, "is self-denial in general so little practised among the Methodists? Why is so exceedingly little of it to be found even in the oldest and largest Societies? The more I observe and consider things, the more clearly it appears what is the cause of this in London, in Bristol, in Birmingham, in Manchester, in Leeds, in Dublin, in Cork. The Methodists grow more and more self-indulgent because they grow rich. Although many of them are still deplorably poor ('tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon!'), yet many others in the space of twenty, thirty, or forty years, are twenty, thirty, yea, a hundred times richer than they first entered the Society. And it is an observation which admits of few exceptions, that nine in ten of these decreased in grace in the same proportion as they increased in wealth."[1] His mind was especially exercised in his old age on the subject of female dress—"O, ye pretty triflers!" he writes in 1787; "I entreat you not to do the devil's work any longer. . . . Let me see, before I die, a Methodist congregation full as plainly dressed as a Quaker congregation. Let your dress be *cheap* as well as plain; otherwise you do but trifle with God and man, and your own souls. No *Quaker linen*, no Brussels lace, no elephantine hats or bonnets, those scandals of female modesty."

[1] This is from the sermon on "*The Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity*," dated Dublin, July 2, 1789. The same subject is treated in the sermon on "*The Rich Fool*," written at Balham, Feb. 19, 1790, and in the one on "*If riches increase*," &c., written at Bristol, Sept. 21, 1790.

To the last he clung to that two-fold idea of what his system was intended to be; it was to be simply an agency for good which required for admission into it no particular opinions, but at the same time it was to be kept closely in union with that Church of which John Wesley never ceased to be a most attached member. How this two-fold idea could be realized in fact is another question; but John Wesley clung with equal tenacity to both sides of it, if one may use the expression, and never more so than in his last days. Two of his latest utterances bring out respectively the one and the other side of the conception. May 18, 1788, he writes—"There is no other religious society under heaven which requires nothing of men in order to their admission into it but a desire to save their souls. Look all around you; you cannot be admitted into the Church, or Society of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opinion, and adhere to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion; but they think, and let think. Neither do they impose any particular mode of worship; but you may continue to worship in your former manner, be it what it may. Now I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is now allowed, or has been allowed since the days of the Apostles. Here is our glorying, and a glorying peculiar to us. What Society shares it with us?" And he repeated the same in effect fifteen months later.

This is one side of the shield. Let us now turn to the other side. In 1790 he wrote what has been termed his valedictory address[1] to his followers, in the *Arminian*

[1] *John Wesley's Place in Church History*, by R. Denny Urlin, p. 172.

Magazine, and in it are these words—"I never had any design of separating from the Church; I have no such design now; I do not believe the Methodists in general design it. I do, and will do, all in my power to prevent such an event; nevertheless, in spite of all I can do, many will separate from it, although I am inclined to think not one half nor perhaps a third of them. These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party, which consequently will dwindle into a dry, dull, separate sect. In flat opposition to them, I declare, once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment will ever separate from it."

A few months after these words were written the end came, on March 2nd, 1791. There was no disease, but simply a breaking up of nature. He had made all his preparations both in temporal and spiritual concerns. His little bequests—they were *very* little ones, for he had saved absolutely nothing—were carefully considered, and he gave "£6 to be divided among the six poor men named by the assistant, who shall carry my body to the grave; for I particularly desire there may be no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of those that loved me, and are following me to Abraham's bosom." His wishes were, of course, attended to, and the tears were not wanting; when the officiating clergyman said, "our dear *father* here departed," instead of "*brother*," the vast multitude broke out into loud sobs.

INDEX.

ADAM, Thomas, of Winteringham, 156
Aldersgate Street, meeting in, 61
Alleine, Joseph, 176
All Saints' Day, Wesley's love of, 38, 39 [205
America, "ordinations" for, 199—
American War, 177
Analogy, Butler's, 99, 187
Annesley, The family of, 1
Antinomianism, 96
Arminian Magazine, The, 177, 211
Asbury, Francis, 200, 202
Assistants, Wesley's, 132, 134
Assurance, doctrine of, 83, 84, 94

Badcock, Mr., 11
Band meeting, The, 128
Baptism, Wesley on, 77—79
Bath, 110, 111, 168
Bell, George, 163, 164
Benson, Bishop, 10, 96
Benson, Joseph, 166
Berridge, John, 112, 145, 155, 167
Bible, Wesley's love of the, 71, 72
Birmingham, 110
Blackheath, 97 [122
Böhler, Peter, 59—62, 65, 67, 84,
Bosanquet, Miss (Mrs. Fletcher), 89
Brevint, Dr., 80, 172
Bristol, 93, 97, 103, 106, 110, 119, 122, 123, 126, 204
Broughton, Mr., 42
Buchan, Lady, 189
Buckingham, Duke of, 8
Burton, Dr., 46
Butler, Bishop, 98—101, 187
Byrom, Dr., 46, 149 *n*, 186

Calm Address to Inhabitants of England, 143 [151
Calvinism, 71, 115, 116, 117, 149—
Calviuistic Controversy, 164—67
Cambridge, 111, 136
Causton, Mr., 56
Cennick, John, 161
Channel Islands, 117
Charterhouse, 8—11
Cheltenham, 110
Cheyne, Dr., 12 [135—38
Children, Wesley's treatment of,
Christ Church, Oxford, 11, 12
Christian Library, The, 174
Christian Perfection, doctrine of, 81—83
Church of England, Wesley's attachment to, 68—70, 115, 124, 130, 208, 211
City Road Chapel, 131, 147
Clarke, Dr. Adam, 137, 209
Class Meeting, The, 30, 126, 127
Clayton, John, 30—33, 46
Clergy, Wesley's relations to the, 101, 109, 110, 155—59, 198, 207
Coke, Dr., 145, 153—55, 199 - 202, 209
Cokesbury College, 202
Complete English Dictionary, 174
Concise Ecclesiastical History, 177
Conference, Wesley's, 138, 155, 166, 168, 194, 195
Controversy, Wesley's dislike of, 114
Conversion, Wesley on, 75
Cornwall, 108
Creighton, James, 155, 199
Curator of Holy Club, 36, 79

David, Christian, 66
Deacon, Thomas, 31, 52
"Deed of Declaration" (1784), 110, 194, 195
Delamotte, Charles, 47, 57
Deptford, 130, 160
Dickinson, Peard, 155 [157
Doctrine of Grace (Warburton's),
Doctrine of Original Sin (Wesley's),
Dress, Wesley's, 188 [175
Dress, Wesley on Female, 210
Dublin, 114
Duty of Constant Commnuion Wesley's), 79

Early rising, Wesley on, 188, 194
Earnest Appeal (Wesley's), 172
Education, Wesley's experiments in, 135—38
Egginton, Mr., 106
Election, doctrine of, 161

Enthusiasm, 160
Enthusiasm of Papists and Methodists compared (Lavington's), 157
Epworth, 1—7, 9, 21, 22, 39—42, 103—106, 118, 120, 162, 179, 180
Erasmus, Bishop of Arcadia, 198
Establishments, Wesley on, 202
Evangelical Clergy and Wesley, 155, 156, 198
Everton, 112

Faith, Christian, 72—74, 76
Farther Appeal (Wesley's), 173
Fenton, Lewis, 19
Fetter Lane Society, 122, 123
Field Preaching, 87, 96—98, 196
Fire at Epworth Rectory, 2, 3, 179
Fletcher, John, 145, 150—52, 166, 199, 208, 209 [177
Fletcher, John, Life of (Wesley's), *Fool of Quality, The*, 177
Foreign Missions (Wesleyan), 155
Foundry, The, 123, 138
Frederika (Georgia), 50, 51
Friday, observance of, 122, 131, 136

Gambold, John, 27, 34—37
George II., King, 143
George III., King, 143, 144
Georgia, 43—58 [180
Ghost at Epworth Rectory, 7, 179,
Gibson, Bishop, 82, 94, 96, 173
Gnomon, Bengel's, 174 [20, 23
Greek Lecturer at Lincoln College,
Grimsby, 118
Grimshaw, William, 112, 145, 155
Guyon, Madame, 177

Halifax, 110
Hall, Westley, 27, 133
Halyburton, Thomas, 101
Hannam Mount, 97
Harris, Howell, 117
Haworth, 112
Hay, Mr. (Rector of Epworth), 105
Helpers, Wesley's, 132—34
Herrnhuth, 65—67
Hervey, James, 23, 156, 165
Hickes, Dean, 17
Hill, Rowland, 167
Hill, Sir Richard, 167
Holiness, Wesley on, 74, 76
Holland, 117
Holy Club, The, 29, 34
Homo unius libri, 70, 71, 181
Honesty, Wesley on, 142
Hopkey, Sophia Christina, 56, 183
Huddersfield, 110
Huntingdon, Lady, 103, 111, 166, 189
Hutchins, Richard, 18, 27, 34
Hutton, Mr., 60, 63, 64
Hymn Books (of the Wesley's), 171
Hymns, Charles Wesley's, 148, 149
Hymns on the Lord's Supper, 80, 172

Indians, The, 45, 46, 53, 57
Ingham, Benjamin, 27, 34, 47, 48, 49, 57, 65
Iustantaneous Conversion, 61, 84, 85
Intermediate State, The, 39
Ireland, 113, 114, 207
Itinerant work (Wesley's), 86—119

Johnson, Dr., 111, 189, 190
Jones, William, of Nayland, 186
Journal, Wesley's, 87, 89, 92, 99, 178, 185, 186 [94, 155
Justification by Faith, 71, 72, 74, 75,

Kempis' Christian Pattern [sic], 13, 28
Kettlewell, John, 17
Kinchin, John, 27, 34 [196, 197, 204
King, Lord, *On the Primitive Church*,
Kingswood, 90, 96, 103, 123, 127, 161
Kingswood Schools, 63, 135—37, 173, 184
Kirkham, Robert, 25, 27, 182
Knox, Alexander, 88 *n*, 90, 91, 187, 207

Lavington, Bishop, 58, 75, 157
Law, William, 33, 34, 46, 62, 63, 158, 173, 175
Lay Preachers, 133, 134, 196
Leeds, 110
"Legal Hundred, The," 194, 195
Letters to Bishop Lavington (Wesley's), 174 [175
Letter to Mr. Horne (Wesley's),
Letters to the Bishop of Gloucester (Wesley's), 175, 176
Lincoln College, Oxford, 15—42
Literary property, Wesley's, 192
Liverpool, 110 [163
London, 93, 103, 106, 110, 121, 160,
Lord's Supper, The, 79—81, 130, 134
Love Feast, The, 30, 129
Lowth, Bishop, 111, 187
Loyalty, Wesley's, 142, 173

Macclesfield, 110, 155
McNab, Alexander, 168
Madeley, 151, 152

Manchester, 110
Man, Isle of, 117
Mansfield, Lord, 205
Marienborn, 65, 66
Marriage, Wesley's, 152
Marshall, Dr. (Rector of Lincoln College), 17
Maxfield, Thomas, 163, 164
Maxwell, Lady, 180
Meriton, Mr., 145, 155
Methodist, The name of, 28, 29, 69, 88
Ministerial Office, The, 81
Minutes of Conference (1770), 166
Mixed Chalice, The, 30
Moderator of the Classes, 20, 21
Money, Wesley's disregard for, 192
Moral and Sacred Poems, A Collection of, 172
Moravians, The, 48, 49, 55, 56, 58, 59, 122
Morgan, Mr., 25, 26, 36 *n.*
Morley, Dr. (Rector of Lincoln College), 15, 22, 23
Murray, Grace, 183

Nelson, John, 103
Nelson, Robert, 120
New Birth, The, 74—79
Newcastle-on-Tyne, 103, 123
Nonjurors, The, 64
Norris, John, 171, 172
Norwich, 162, 163
Notes on the New Testament (Wesley's), 174, 197

Oglethorpe, General, 43—45, 46
Olivers, Thomas, 166, 177, 190
Openness, Wesley's, 191, 192
"Ordinations," Wesley's, 196—206
Oxford, 38, 41, 110 and *passim.*
Oxford Methodists, The, 24—42, 121, 182

Parochial System, The, 21, 156, 196
Pawson, John, 140, 205, 208
Penitent's Meeting, The, 129
Perronet, Vincent, 145, 152, 153, 173
Piers, Mr., 145, 155 [146
Physical phenomena, 98, 112, 113,
Plain Account of the People called Methodists (Wesley's), 173
Platonists, The English, 187
Poems by Charles Wesley, 177
Potter, Archbishop, 10, 14, 17, 96
Prayers for the dead, 30
Presbyterians, 115
Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion (Wesley's), 175
Prideaux, Dean, 187
Primitive Church, Wesley's love for the, 30, 57, 78, 124—29, 156
Primitive Physic (Wesley's), 173
Principles of a Methodist (Wesley's),
Public school training, 9, 10 [172
Puritan Divines, 187

Quarterly Meeting, The, 127

Reading, Wesley's course of, 185—87
Reasons Against Separation from the Church of England (Wesley's), 147, 175
Reformer, Wesley as a, 144, 158, 159
Remarks on Farrago double-distilled,
Renty, M. de, 171 [177
Repentance, Wesley on, 71, 75, 75
Revised Psalter and Prayer-Book for America (Wesley's), 177, 200
Richardson, Mr., 155
Riots against Methodists, 106—109
Roman Catholics, Wesley and, 129, 130, 173, 174, 208
Romley, Mr. (Curate of Epworth), 103—105
Rutherford, Samuel, 176
Ryan, Sarah, 184

Sacraments, Wesley on the, 76—81, 133
Salvation, Wesley's views on, 74
Sanctification, Wesley's views on, 72
Sanderson, Bishop, 16, 17
Savannah, 50, 51, 57
School (*see* Kingswood)
School-books by Wesley, 173, 174
Schoolmasters, 135 [206
Scotch Episcopal Church, 14, 116,
Scotland, 114—16, 205, 206
Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man*, 14, 172
Seabury, Bishop, 205
Seasonable Address (about American War), Wesley's, 177
Seed, Jeremiah, 187
Select Society, The, 129
Sellon, Mr., 166
Serious Thoughts on the Earthquake at Lisbon (Wesley's), 175
Sermons, Wesley's, 175, 177
Shirley, Hon. W., 166
Shoreham Vicarage, 152
Short History of Methodism (Wesley's), 176

Simeon, Charles, 209
Simpson, David, 155
Slave Trade, Wesley on, 141, 142
Smuggling, Wesley on, 141
Social Qualities of Wesley, 188, 189
Societies, The Religious, 61, 94, 95, 120, 121
Societies, The United, 87, 121—144, 194, 210, 211
Sortes Biblicæ, 181
Southey's Life of Wesley, 90, 91, 199
S. P. G., 44, 47
Spinckes' Devotions, 33
Staffordshire, Riots in, 106—108
Sterne, Laurence, 186
Stewards, The, 135
Stillingfleet's *Irenicon*, 197
Style, Wesley on, 178
Summary of the Wisdom of God in Creation (Wesley's), 176
Sunday Schools, Wesley on, 209
Swift, Dean, 186

Taylor, Bishop Jeremy, *Holy Living and Dying*, 28
Theron and Aspasio (Hervey's), 165
Thorold, Sir John, 17
Thoughts upon Necessity (Wesley's), 177 [176
Thoughts on a Single Life (Wesley's), *Thoughts on Slavery* (Wesley's), 142
Tickets of membership, 30, 128
Tomo-chi-chi, 44, 45, 53, 54
Tooke, Andrew, 8, 9
Toplady, Augustus, 167
Tracts (Wesley's), 172—76
Treatise on Baptism (Wesley's), 77
Trevecca, 166

United Brethren, The, 65
United Societies (*see* Societies)

Vasey, Thomas, 199, 200, 201
Vazeille, Mrs. (Mrs. John Wesley), 183—85
Venn, Henry, 156
Vine, The Lincoln, 25
Visitors of the sick, 135

Wales, 116, 117
Walker, of Truro, 156
Walker, Dr. Thomas, 8
Walsh, Thomas, 208
Warburton, Bishop, 157
Watchnight, The, 30, 127
Wednesbury, 106—108
Weekly Communion, 32, 50, 130 131, 201
Wesley, Charles, 10, 24, 25, 34, 47, 50, 57, 86, 93—95, 123, 145, 146—49, 158, 183, 191, 198, 203—206
Wesley, John, early years, 1—7; at Charterhouse, 8—11; at Christ Church, 11—14; ordination, 13, 14; at Lincoln College, 15; his father's curate, 21, 22; an Oxford Methodist, 24—42; in Georgia, 43—58; Moravian influence on, 59—68; his teaching, 69—85; his itinerant work, 86—119; his organization, 120—144; his friends and opponents, 145—159; his difficulties within the camp, 160—168; his literary work, 169—178; his personal traits, 179—192; his old age and death, 193—212
Wesley, Mrs. John, 148, 183—85
Wesley, Martha, 6
Wesley, Samuel, the elder, 1—7, 13, 21, 22, 26, 39—42, 45, 46, 120, 179, 180
Wesley, Samuel, the younger, 10, 18, 39—41, 45, 46, 47, 63, 64, 65, 101—103, 180
Wesley, Susanna, 1—7, 13, 14, 21, 46, 102, 180
Westminster School, 10
West Street Chapel, 131, 132
Whatcoat, Richard, 199, 200, 201
Whitefield, George, 27, 53, 86, 96, 97, 111, 116, 145, 149, 150, 162, 165
Whitehead, Dr., 91, 188, 209
Whitelamb, John, 23, 27
Wilberforce, William, 142, 209
Wilkes riots, Wesley on the, 143, 176
Williamson, Mr. and Mrs., 56, 57
Witchcraft, Wesley on, 181
Witness of the Spirit, The, 62
Word to a Methodist (Wesley's), 117
Wroote, 21, 22

Young's *Night Thoughts*, 176

Zinzendorf, Count, 65—67

Richard Clay & Sons, Limited, London & Bungay.

18, *Bury Street, W.C., January*, 1891.

MESSRS. METHUEN'S

New Books and Announcements.

1891.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
FICTION	2
GENERAL LITERATURE	3
NEW BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS	4
METHUEN'S NOVEL SERIES	5
ENGLISH LEADERS OF RELIGION	6
SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY	7
DITTO	8
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERIES	9
DITTO	10
NEW AND RECENT BOOKS	11
DITTO	12
EDUCATIONAL WORKS	13
WORKS BY A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A.	14
SCHOOL EXAMINATION SERIES	15

FICTION.

S. BARING GOULD.

URITH: A Story of Dartmoor. By S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah," "Arminell," &c. 3 vols. [*February.*

HANNAH LYNCH.

PRINCE OF THE GLADES. By HANNAH LYNCH. 2 vols. [*February.*

W. CLARK RUSSELL.

A MARRIAGE AT SEA. By W. CLARK RUSSELL, Author of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor," &c. 2 vols. [*February.*

W. H. POLLOCK.

FERDINAND'S CLAIM. By WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK. Post 8vo. 1*s.* [*February.*

R. PRYCE.

THE QUIET MRS. FLEMING. By RICHARD PRYCE. Crown 8vo. 3*s.* 6*d.* [*February.*

M. BETHAM EDWARDS.

DISARMED. By M. BETHAM EDWARDS, Author of "Kitty." Crown 8vo. 3*s.* 6*d.* [*February.*

W. E. NORRIS.

JACK'S FATHER. By W. E. NORRIS, Author of "Mademoiselle de Mersac." Crown 8vo. 3*s.* 6*d.* [*March.*

S. BARING GOULD.

TOM A' TUDLAMS. By S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah." Crown 8vo. 3*s.* 6*d.* [*May.*

LESLIE KEITH.

A LOST ILLUSION. By LESLIE KEITH, Author of "The Chilcotes," "A Hurricane in Petticoats," &c. 3 vols. Crown 8vo.

"Were it only a shade more cheerful it would be a perfect story."—*Manchester Examiner.*
"A really pathetic story full of human nature."—*Graphic.*

G. MANVILLE FENN.

A DOUBLE KNOT. By G. MANVILLE FENN, Author of "The Vicar's People," "Eli's Children," &c. 3 vols. Crown 8vo.

"A clever novel. The plot is intricate and well managed. The story abounds in strong and exciting situations."—*Speaker.*

L. T. MEADE.

THE HONOURABLE MISS: A Tale of a Country Town. By L. T. MEADE, Author of "Scamp and I," "A Girl of the People," &c. 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

"Delightfully fresh and winning."—*Scotsman.*

GENERAL LITERATURE.

S. BARING GOULD.

HISTORIC ODDITIES AND STRANGE EVENTS. Second Series. By S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah," "Old Country Life," &c. Demy 8vo. 10*s.* 6*d.* [*Ready.*

"Mr. Baring Gould has a keen eye for colour and effect, and the subjects he has chosen give ample scope to his descriptive and analytic faculties. The new series of 'Historic Oddities and Strange Events' is a perfectly fascinating book. Whether considered as merely popular reading or as a succession of studies in the freaks of human history, it is equally worthy of perusal, while it is marked by the artistic literary colouring and happy lightness of style."—*Scottish Leader.*

J. B. BURNE, M.A.

PARSON AND PEASANT: Chapters of their Natural History. By J. B. BURNE, M.A., Rector of Wasing. Crown 8vo. 5*s.* [*Ready.*

"'Parson and Peasant' is a book not only to be interested in, but to learn something from—a book which may prove a help to many a clergyman, and broaden the hearts and ripen the charity of laymen."—*Derby Mercury.*

W. CLARK RUSSELL.

THE LIFE OF ADMIRAL LORD COLLINGWOOD. By W. CLARK RUSSELL, Author of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor." With Illustrations by F. BRANGWYN. 8vo. [*In February.*

P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A.

OLD ENGLISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES. By P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., Author of "Our English Villages." Illustrated. Post 8vo. [*In April.*

Edited by A. CLARK, M.A.

THE COLLEGES OF OXFORD: Their History and their Traditions. By Members of the University. Edited by A. CLARK, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of Lincoln College. 8vo. [*In the Press.*

Edited by J. WELLS, M.A.

OXFORD AND OXFORD LIFE: With Chapters on the Examinations by Members of the University. Edited by J. WELLS, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of Wadham College. Crown 8vo. [*In the Press.*

S. BARING GOULD.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE CÆSARS: The Emperors of the Julian and Claudian Lines. With numerous Illustrations from Busts, Gems, Cameos, &c. By S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah," &c. [*In the Press.*

W. G. COLLINGWOOD, M.A.

JOHN RUSKIN: His Life and Work. By W. G. COLLINGWOOD, M.A., late Scholar of University College, Oxford. Crown 8vo. [*In Preparation.*

H. H. HENSON, M.A.

DISSENT IN ENGLAND: A Sketch of the History and Constitution of the Principal Nonconformist Sects. By REV. H. H. HENSON, M.A., Fellow of All Souls' College, and Rector of Barking. 8vo. [*In Preparation.*

NEW BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

W. CLARK RUSSELL.

MASTER ROCKAFELLAR'S VOYAGE. By W. CLARK RUSSELL, Author of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor," &c. Illustrated by GORDON BROWNE. Crown 8vo. 5*s.*

"Mr. Clark Russell's story of 'Master Rockafellar's Voyage' will be among the favourites of the Christmas books. There is a rattle and 'go' all through it, and its illustrations are charming in themselves, and very much above the average in the way in which they are produced. Mr. Clark Russell is thoroughly at home on sea and with boys, and he manages to relate and combine the marvellous in so plausible a manner that we are quite prepared to allow that Master Rockafellar's is no unfair example of every midshipman's first voyage. We can heartily recommend this pretty book to the notice of the parents and friends of sea-loving boys."—*Guardian.*

"In the frank and convincing narrative of Master Rockafellar there happens to be set a short story which should make the fortune of the book. 'La Mulette' is as fine a piece of story-telling as ever Mr. Russell has given us, and we heartily commend it to any boy who has the sense to distinguish between the author who has a story to tell, and the author who has to tell a story."—*Speaker.*

G. MANVILLE FENN.

SYD BELTON: or, The Boy who would not go to Sea. By G. MANVILLE FENN, Author of "In the King's Name," &c. Illustrated by GORDON BROWNE. Crown 8vo. 5*s.*

"Who among the young story-reading public will not rejoice at the sight of the old combination, so often proved admirable—a story by Manville Fenn, illustrated by Gordon Browne The story, too, is one of the good old sort, full of life and vigour, breeziness and fun. It begins well and goes on better, and from the time Syd joins his ship exciting incidents follow each other in such rapid and brilliant succession that nothing short of absolute compulsion would induce the reader to lay it down."—*Journal of Education.*

"The pick of the adventure books for this season. There is not a dull page in it. 'Syd Belton' is a capital book."—*Speaker.*

"From beginning to end the book is a vivid and even striking picture of sea-life."—*Spectator.*

Mrs. PARR.

DUMPS. By MRS. PARR, Author of "Adam and Eve," "Dorothy Fox," &c. Illustrated by W. PARKINSON. Crown 8vo. 3*s.* 6*d.*

"One of the prettiest stories which even this clever writer has given the world for a long time."—*World.* "A very sweet and touching story."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

L. T. MEADE.

A GIRL OF THE PEOPLE. By L. T. MEADE, Author of "Scamp and I," &c. Illustrated by R. BARNES. Crown 8vo. 3*s.* 6*d.*

"An excellent story. Vivid portraiture of character, and broad and wholesome lessons about life."—*Spectator.* "One of Mrs. Meade's most fascinating books."—*Daily News.*

METHUEN'S NOVEL SERIES.

THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

MESSRS. METHUEN will issue from time to time a Series of copyright Novels, by well-known Authors, handsomely bound, at the above popular price. The first volumes (ready) are:

F. MABEL ROBINSON.

1. **THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.**

S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah," &c.

2. **JACQUETTA.**

Mrs. LEITH ADAMS (Mrs. De Courcy Laffan).

3. **MY LAND OF BEULAH.**

G. MANVILLE FENN.

4. **ELI'S CHILDREN.**

S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah," &c.

5. **ARMINELL**: A Social Romance.

EDNA LYALL, Author of "Donovan," &c.

6. **DERRICK VAUGHAN, NOVELIST.** With Portrait of Author.

F. MABEL ROBINSON.

7. **DISENCHANTMENT.**

M. BETHAM EDWARDS.

8. **DISARMED.** [*Shortly.*

W. E. NORRIS.

9. **JACK'S FATHER.** [*Shortly.*

S. BARING GOULD.

10. **TOM A' TUDLAMS.** [*Shortly.*

Other Volumes will be announced in due course.

English Leaders of Religion.

Edited by A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A.

Under the above title MESSRS. METHUEN have commenced like publication of a series of short biographies, free from party bias, of the most prominent leaders of religious life and thought in this and the last century.

Each volume will contain a succinct account and estimate of the career, the influence, and the literary position of the subject of the memoir.

The following are already arranged—

CARDINAL NEWMAN. *R. H. Hutton.* [*Ready.*

"Few who read this book will fail to be struck by the wonderful insight it displays into the nature of the Cardinal's genius and the spirit of his life."—WILFRID WARD, in the *Tablet.*

"Full of knowledge, excellent in method, and intelligent in criticism. We regard it as wholly admirable."—*Academy.*

"An estimate, careful, deliberate, full of profound reasoning and of acute insight."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

JOHN WESLEY. *J. H. Overton, M.A.* [*In February.*

JOHN KEBLE. *W. Lock, M.A.*

CHARLES SIMEON. *H. C. G. Moule, M.A.*

BISHOP WILBERFORCE. *G. W. Daniell, M.A.*

F. D. MAURICE. *Colonel F. Maurice, R.E.*

THOMAS CHALMERS. *Mrs. Oliphant.*

CARDINAL MANNING. *A. W. Hutton, M.A.*

Other Volumes will be announced in due course.

SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY.

Edited by H. de B. GIBBINS, M.A.

Crown 8vo. 2*s.* 6*d.*

MESSRS. METHUEN beg to announce the publication of a series of volumes upon those topics of social, economic and industrial interest that are at the present moment foremost in the public mind. Each volume of the series will be written by an author who is an acknowledged authority upon the subject with which he deals, and who will treat his question in a thoroughly sympathetic but impartial manner, with special reference to the historic aspect of the subject and from the point of view of the Historical School of economics and social science. The Labour Question will be treated of in the volumes on Trades Unions and Co-operation: the Land Question will form the subject of another two volumes; others will treat of Socialism in England, in its various phases, and of the labour problems of the Continent also. The monograph on Commerce will be of special interest at present in view of the recent development of American commercial policy. Those on Education and on Poverty will be of similar importance in view of current discussion, and the volume on Mutual Thrift will prove a valuable survey of the various agencies for that purpose already in existence among the working classes.

The following form the earlier Volumes of the Series:—

ABOUT *Feb.* 1891.

1. **TRADES UNIONISM—NEW AND OLD.**
   G. HOWELL, M.P., Author of "The Conflicts of Capital and Labour."

March. 2. **POVERTY AND PAUPERISM.**
   Rev. L. R. PHELPS, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.

3. **THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT OF TO-DAY.**
   G. J. HOLYOAKE, Author of "The History of Co-operation."

4. **MUTUAL THRIFT.**
   Rev. J. FROME WILKINSON, M.A., Author of "The Friendly Society Movement."

5. **ENGLISH SOCIALISM OF TO-DAY.**
   HUBERT BLAND, One of the Authors of "Fabian Essays."

6. **THE COMMERCE OF NATIONS.**
   C. F. BASTABLE, M.A., Professor of Economics at Trinity College, Dublin, and Author of "International Commerce."

7. **ENGLISH LAND AND ENGLISH MEN.**
   Rev. C. W. STUBBS, M.A., Author of "The Labourers and the Land."

8. **MODERN LABOUR AND OLD ECONOMIES.**
   H. de B. GIBBINS, M.A. (Editor), Author of "The Industrial History of England."

9. **CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM IN ENGLAND.**
   Rev. J. CARTER, M.A., of Pusey House, Oxford, Editor of "The Economic Review."

10. **LAND NATIONALIZATION.**

11. **THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE.**

12. **CONTINENTAL LABOUR.**

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERIES.

Under the above title MESSRS. METHUEN have commenced the publication of a series of books on historical, literary, and economic subjects, suitable for extension students and home-reading circles. The volumes are intended to assist the lecturer and not to usurp his place. Each volume will be complete in itself, and the subjects will be treated by competent writers in a broad and philosophic spirit.

Edited by J. E. SYMES, M.A.,

Principal of University College, Nottingham.

Crown 8vo. *2s. 6d.*

The following volumes are already arranged, and others will be announced shortly.

THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By H. DE B. GIBBINS, M.A., late Scholar of Wadham Coll., Oxon., Cobden Prizeman. With Maps and Plans. [*Ready.*

"A compact and clear story of our industrial development. A study of this concise but luminous book cannot fail to give the reader a clear insight into the principal phenomena of our industrial history. The editor and publishers are to be congratulated on this first volume of their venture, and we shall look with expectant interest for the succeeding volumes of the series. If they maintain the same standard of excellence the series will make a permanent place for itself among the many series which appear from time to time."—*University Extension Journal.*

"A careful and lucid sketch."—*Times.*

"The writer is well-informed, and from first to last his work is profoundly interesting."—*Scots Observer.*

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH POLITICAL ECONOMY. By L. L. PRICE, M.A., Fellow of Oriel Coll., Oxon., Extension Lecturer in Political Economy. [*February.*

ENGLISH SOCIAL REFORMERS. By H. DE B. GIBBINS, M.A., late Scholar of Wadham Coll., Oxon., Cobden Prizeman.

PROBLEMS OF POVERTY: An Inquiry into the Industrial Conditions of the Poor. By J. A. HOBSON, M.A., late Scholar of Lincoln Coll., Oxon., U. E. Lecturer in Economics. [*March.*

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. By J. E. SYMES, M.A., Principal of University Coll., Nottingham. [*In the Press.*

NAPOLEON. By E. L. S. HORSBURGH, M.A., Camb., U. E. Lecturer in History.

ENGLISH POLITICAL HISTORY. By T. J. LAWRENCE, M.A., late Fellow and Tutor of Downing Coll., Cambridge, U. E. Lecturer in History.

SHAKESPEARE. By F. H. TRENCH, M.A., Fellow of All Souls' Coll., Oxon., U. E. Lecturer in Literature.

VICTORIAN POETS. By A. SHARP. [*April.*

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. By G. C. MOORE-SMITH, M.A., Camb., U. E. Lecturer in Language.

AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY. By J. SOLOMON, M.A., Oxon., late Lecturer in Philosophy at University Coll., Nottingham.

PSYCHOLOGY. By F. S. GRANGER, M.A., Lond., Lecturer in Philosophy at University Coll., Nottingham. [*In the Press.*

ENGLISH PAINTERS. By D. S. MACCOLL, M.A., Oxon., Fellow of Univ. Coll., London, U. E. Lecturer in Art and Literature.

ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE. By ERNEST RADFORD, M.A., Camb., U. E. Lecturer in Art. With Illustrations.

THE EVOLUTION OF PLANT LIFE: Lower Forms. By G. MASSEE, Kew Gardens, U. E. Lecturer in Botany. With Illustrations. [*In the Press.*

THE CHEMISTRY OF LIFE AND HEALTH. By C. W. KIMMINS, M.A., Camb., U. E. Lecturer in Chemistry.

FICTION.

E. LYNN LINTON.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF JOSHUA DAVIDSON, Christian and Communist. By E. LYNN LINTON. Eleventh and Cheaper Edition. Post 8vo, 1*s.*

HISTORY AND POLITICS.

E. LYNN LINTON.

ABOUT IRELAND. By E. LYNN LINTON. *2nd Edition.* Cr. 8vo, bds., 1*s.*

"A brilliant and justly proportioned view of the Irish Question."—*Standard.*

T. RALEIGH, M.A.

IRISH POLITICS: An Elementary Sketch. By T. RALEIGH, M.A., Fellow of All Souls', Oxford, Author of "Elementary Politics." Fcap. 8vo, paper boards, 1*s.*; cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"A very clever work."—MR. GLADSTONE.

"Unionist as he is, his little book has been publicly praised for its cleverness both by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley. It does, in fact, raise most of the principal points of the Irish controversy, and puts them tersely, lucidly, and in such a way as to strike into the mind of the reader."—*The Speaker.*

"Salient facts and clear expositions in a few sentences packed with meaning. Every one who wishes to have the vital points of Irish politics at his finger's end should get this book by heart."—*Scotsman.*

F. MABEL ROBINSON.

IRISH HISTORY FOR ENGLISH READERS. By F. MABEL ROBINSON. *Fourth Edition.* Crown 8vo, boards, 1*s.*

GENERAL LITERATURE.

Edited by F. LANGBRIDGE, M.A.

BALLADS OF THE BRAVE: Poems of Chivalry, Enterprise, Courage, and Constancy, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day. Edited, with Notes, by Rev. F. LANGBRIDGE. Crown 8vo.

"A very happy conception happily carried out. These 'Ballads of the Brave' are intended to suit the real tastes of boys, and will suit the taste of the great majority. It is not an ordinary selector who could have so happily put together these characteristic samples. Other readers besides boys may learn much from them."—*Spectator.*

"The book is full of splendid things."—*World.*

Presentation Edition. Handsomely Bound, 3*s.* 6*d.* (School Edition, 2*s.* 6*d.*)
Or, in Three Parts, 1*s.* each, for School Readers.

I. TROY TO FLODDEN. II. BOSWORTH TO WATERLOO. III. CRIMÆA TO KHARTOUM.

P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A.

OUR ENGLISH VILLAGES: Their Story and their Antiquities. By P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.R.H.S., Rector of Barkham, Berks. Post 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* Illustrated.

"A pleasantly written little volume, giving much interesting information concerning villages and village life."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"The object of the author is not so much to describe any particular village as to give a clear idea of what village life has been in England from the earliest historical times. An extremely amusing and interesting little book, which should find a place in every parochial library."—*Guardian.*

A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A.

OXFORD: ITS LIFE AND SCHOOLS. Ed. by A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A., assisted by members of the University. *New Edition.* Cr. 8vo. 5*s.*

"Offers a full and in most respects a satisfactory description of the country through which students must travel, and affords to parents who are desirous of calculating the expenses and rewards of University education, a mass of useful information conveniently arranged and brought down to the most recent date."—*Athenæum.*

"We can honestly say of Mr. Stedman's volume that it deserves to be read by the people for whom it is intended, the parents and guardians of Oxford students, present and to come, and by such students themselves."—*Spectator.*

Works by **S. BARING GOULD,**

Author of "Mehalah," &c.

OLD COUNTRY LIFE. By S. BARING GOULD. With Sixty-seven Illustrations by W. PARKINSON, F. D. BEDFORD, and F. MASEY. Large Crown 8vo, cloth super extra, top edge gilt, 10*s.* 6*d.* *Second Edition.*

"'Old Country Life,' as healthy wholesome reading, full of breezy life and movement, full of quaint stories vigorously told, will not be excelled by any book to be published throughout the year. Sound, hearty, and English to the core."—*World.*

"Mr. Baring Gould is well known as a clever and versatile author; but he never wrote a more delightful book than the volume before us. He has described English country life with the fidelity that only comes with close acquaintance, and with an appreciation of its more attractive features not surpassed even in the pages of Washington Irving. The illustrations add very much to the charm of the book, and the artists in their drawings of old churches and manor-houses, streets, cottages, and gardens, have greatly assisted the author."
Manchester Guardian.

HISTORIC ODDITIES AND STRANGE EVENTS. By S. BARING GOULD. FIRST SERIES. Demy 8vo, 10*s.* 6*d.* *Second Edition.*

"A collection of exciting and entertaining chapters. The whole volume is delightful reading."—*Times.*

"The work, besides being agreeable to read, is valuable for purposes of reference. The entire contents are stimulating and delightful."—*Notes and Queries.*

HISTORIC ODDITIES AND STRANGE EVENTS. SECOND SERIES. By S. BARING GOULD, Author of "Mehalah," "Old Country Life," &c. Demy 8vo, 10*s.* 6*d.* [*Ready.*

"Mr. Baring Gould has a keen eye for colour and effect, and the subjects he has chosen give ample scope to his descriptive and analytic faculties. The new series of 'Historic Oddities and Strange Events,' is a perfectly fascinating book. Whether considered as merely popular reading or as a succession of studies in the freaks of human history, it is equally worthy of perusal, while it is marked by artistic literary colouring and happy lightness of style."—*Scottish Leader.*

SONGS OF THE WEST: Traditional Ballads and Songs of the West of England, with their Traditional Melodies. Collected by S. BARING GOULD, M.A., and H. FLEETWOOD SHEPPARD, M.A. Arranged for Voice and Piano. In 4 Parts (containing 25 Songs each), 3*s.* each. *Part I., Fourth Edition. Part II., Second Edition. Part III., ready. Part IV., in the Press.*

"A rich and varied collection of humour, pathos, grace, and poetic fancy."—*Saturday Review.*

YORKSHIRE ODDITIES AND STRANGE EVENTS. By S. BARING GOULD. New and Cheaper Edition. Crown 8vo, 6*s.*
[*Now ready.*

JACQUETTA, and other Stories. By S. BARING GOULD. Crown 8vo, 3*s.* 6*d.*

ARMINELL: A Social Romance. By S. BARING GOULD. New Edition. Crown 8vo, 3*s.* 6*d.*

"To say that a book is by the author of 'Mehalah' is to imply that it contains a story cast on strong lines, containing dramatic possibilities, vivid and sympathetic descriptions of Nature, and a wealth of ingenious imagery. All these expectations are justified by 'Arminell.'"
Speaker.

EDUCATIONAL WORKS.

METHUEN'S SCIENCE SERIES.

MESSRS. METHUEN propose to issue a Series of Science Manuals suitable for use in schools. They will be edited by Mr. R. Elliot Steel, M.A., F.C.S., Senior Natural Science Master in Bradford Grammar School, and will be published at a moderate price. The following are ready or in preparation—

THE WORLD OF SCIENCE. Including Chemistry, Heat, Light, Sound, Magnetism, Electricity, Botany, Zoology, Physiology, Astronomy, and Geology. By R. ELLIOT STEEL, M.A., F.C.S., Senior Natural Science Master in Bradford Grammar School. 147 Illustrations, Crown 8vo, *2s. 6d.*

"Mr. Steel's Manual is admirable in many ways. The Book is well calculated to attract and retain the attention of the young."—*Saturday Review.*

"If Mr. Steel is to be placed second to any for this quality of lucidity, it is only to Huxley himself; and to be named in the same breath with this master of the craft of teaching is to be accredited with the clearness of style and simplicity of arrangement that belong to thorough mastery of a subject."—*Parents' Review.*

ELEMENTARY LIGHT with numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo. [*February.*

,, ELECTRICITY AND MAGNETISM.

,, HEAT.

Other Volumes will be announced in due course.

R. E. STEEL, M.A.

REVISED FOR NEW SESSION.

PRACTICAL INORGANIC CHEMISTRY. For the Elementary Stage of the South Kensington Examinations in Science and Art. By R. E. STEEL, M.A., Senior Natural Science Master at Bradford Grammar School. Crown 8vo, cloth, 1*s.* [*Now Ready.*

R. J. MORICH.

A GERMAN PRIMER. With Exercises. By R. J. MORICH, Chief Modern Language Master at Manchester Grammar School. [*In the Press.*

H. de B. GIBBINS, M.A.

COMPANION GERMAN GRAMMAR. By H. DE B. GIBBINS, M.A., Assistant Master at Nottingham High School. Crown 8vo, 1*s. 6d.* [*Ready.*

E. McQUEEN GRAY.

GERMAN PASSAGES for UNSEEN TRANSLATION. By E. MCQUEEN GRAY. Crown 8vo, *2s. 6d.* [*Ready.*

A. W. VERRALL, M.A.

SELECTIONS FROM HORACE. With Introduction, Notes, and Vocabulary. By A. W. VERRALL, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of Trinity Coll., Cambridge. Fcap. 8vo. [*In the Press.*

SELECTIONS FROM HERODOTUS. With Introduction, Notes, and Vocabulary. By A. C. LIDDELL, M.A., Assistant Master at Nottingham High School. Fcap. 8vo. [*In the Press.*

WORKS BY A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A.

WADHAM COLLEGE, OXON.

FIRST LATIN LESSONS. *Second Edition, Enlarged.* Crown 8vo, 2*s.* [*Ready.*

FIRST LATIN READER. With Notes adapted to the Shorter Latin Primer and Vocabulary. Crown 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.* [*Ready.*

EASY LATIN PASSAGES FOR UNSEEN TRANSLATION. *Second Edition, Enlarged.* Fcap. 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.*

EASY LATIN EXERCISES ON THE SYNTAX OF THE SHORTER AND REVISED LATIN PRIMERS. With Vocabulary. *Second Edition.* Crown 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* Issued with the consent of Dr. Kennedy.

NOTANDA QUAEDAM: MISCELLANEOUS LATIN EXERCISES ON COMMON RULES AND IDIOMS. With Vocabulary. Fcap. 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.*

LATIN VOCABULARIES FOR REPETITION: arranged according to Subjects. *Third Edition.* Fcap. 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.*

FIRST GREEK LESSONS. [*In preparation.*

EASY GREEK PASSAGES FOR UNSEEN TRANSLATION. [*In preparation.*

EASY GREEK EXERCISES ON ELEMENTARY SYNTAX. [*In preparation.*

GREEK VOCABULARIES FOR REPETITION: arranged according to Subjects. Fcap. 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.*

GREEK TESTAMENT SELECTIONS. For the use of Schools. *New Edition.* With Introduction, Notes, and Vocabulary. Fcap. 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.*

FIRST FRENCH LESSONS. [*In the Press*

EASY FRENCH PASSAGES FOR UNSEEN TRANSLATION. Fcap. 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.*

EASY FRENCH EXERCISES ON ELEMENTARY SYNTAX. With Vocabulary. Crown 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* [*Ready.*

FRENCH VOCABULARIES FOR REPETITION: arranged according to Subjects. Fcap. 8vo, 1*s.*

See also School Examination Series, p. 15.

SCHOOL EXAMINATION SERIES.

Edited by A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A.

Crown 8vo. *2s. 6d.* each.

In use at Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Repton, Cheltenham, Sherborne, Haileybury, Merchant Taylors, Manchester, &c.

FRENCH EXAMINATION PAPERS IN MISCELLANEOUS GRAMMAR AND IDIOMS. By A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A. *Fifth Edition.*

A KEY, issued to Tutors and Private Students only, to be had on application to the Publishers. *Second Edition.* Cr. 8vo, *5s.*

LATIN EXAMINATION PAPERS IN MISCELLANEOUS GRAMMAR AND IDIOMS. By A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A. *Third Edition.* KEY (issued as above), *6s.*

GREEK EXAMINATION PAPERS IN MISCELLANEOUS GRAMMAR AND IDIOMS. By A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A. *Second Edition, Enlarged.* KEY (issued as above), *6s.*

GERMAN EXAMINATION PAPERS IN MISCELLANEOUS GRAMMAR AND IDIOMS. By R. J. MORICH, Manchester Grammar School. *Second Edition.* KEY (issued as above), *5s.*

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY EXAMINATION PAPERS. By C. H. SPENCE, M.A., Clifton College.

SCIENCE EXAMINATION PAPERS. By R. E. STEEL, M.A., F.C.S., Chief Natural Science Master, Bradford Grammar School. In three volumes.

Part I. Chemistry.
Part II. Physics (Sound, Light, Heat, Magnetism, Electricity).
Part III. Biology and Geology. [*In preparation.*

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE EXAMINATION PAPERS. By A. M. M. STEDMAN, M.A. [KEY. *In the Press.*

EXAMINATION PAPERS IN BOOK-KEEPING, with Preliminary Exercises. Compiled and arranged by J. T. MEDHURST, F. S. Accts. and Auditors, and Lecturer at City of London College. *3s.*

ENGLISH LITERATURE, Questions for Examination in. Chiefly collected from College Papers set at Cambridge. With an Introduction on the Study of English. By the Rev. W. W. SKEAT, Litt.D., LL.D., Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge University. *Third Edition, Revised.*

ARITHMETIC EXAMINATION PAPERS. By C. PENDLEBURY, M.A., Senior Mathematical Master, St. Paul's School. KEY, *5s.*

TRIGONOMETRY EXAMINATION PAPERS. By E. H. WARD, M.A., Assistant Master at St. Paul's School. KEY, *5s.*